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[FITZGERALD LEFT THE BANK WITH TWELVE HUNDRED AND FIFTY POUNDS IN HIS POCKET.]

SWEET INISFAIL.

A ROMANCE.

By RICHARD DOWLING,

AUTHOR OF

"The Mystery of Killard," "The Weird Sisters,"
"The Duke's Sweetheart," "A Sapphire Ring," etc

PART I.—INHERITANCE.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE WEST GATE.

WHEN Fitzgerald reached the West Gate and knocked at the door, he turned about and looked down the Main Street. It was a bright,

clear, bland May afternoon, and he thought he had never seen the principal street of his native town looking so familiar and so dear. Those who have been born in small provincial places and have had in their fresh youth the opportunity of learning by rote every feature and aspect of the place of their birth, enjoy a peculiar privilege over the natives of great cities.

In the ordinary course of human life, people who have first seen the light in the great gatherings of man shift their abodes several times before they arrive at maturity, and, in so shifting, they not only change their own point of sight, but they lose altogether intercourse with the features at one time most commonly present to their eyes.

In small towns like Clonmore, even although with the change of fortune or other exigencies of fate people may shift from the east to the west the effect of this is merely a change in the kaleidoscope without any ma-

terial alteration of the objects which make up the whole. Thus the very insistency with which a certain set of houses and streets and bridges and trees have been impressed upon the youthful memory from a variety of standpoints and under the development of life, makes them seem almost sentient parts of our own natures, and causes us to sympathize with them in their vicissitudes under the influence of sunshine or rain, of prosperous growth, decay, or violence.

As Fitzgerald looked down the Main Street, his memory went back to his childish hours. He recalled with tenderness the dim images of his indulgent and affectionate parents. He remembered, with startling vividness, his father taking him by the hand through the fair which was held in the streets of the town, and the mingled fear and delight with which he saw the cows and sheep and the great bulls with the ropes round their horns or through rings in their noses to hold them from doing harm.



And then how many reminiscences of Agnes and his love for her, this one street recalled. His mind was so busy with the past that he did not hear the slight sound the door made opening behind him.

"Michael! Michael! are you dreaming?"

He spun round. Agnes was in the doorway. "I was," he said, entering and closing the door after him. Then, taking her tenderly in his arms, he said: "I was dreaming of you. I never dream of anything else. I do not want to dream of anything else. My darling! my darling Agnes!"

She looked up into his face, and he stooped down and kissed her.

"Are you quite well?" he whispered.

"Quite well," she answered, with one of those soft, dreamy, almost sad smiles, which made the people call her Sweet Infaisl.

He bent over her for a minute, looking into her face with an agony of solicitation. He did not know what was in his heart, but he felt as though it would burst with some exquisitely refined grief. To hold that girl in his arms as he held her now was the greatest joy he had ever hoped for in this world, and now all the joy had gone out of it and he was sensible of nothing but a premonition of miserable woe. It is so with all of us in our moments of most exalted earthly happiness; at the highest festivals of the heart, when our natures are steeped in the most satisfying realizations of our hopes, ever some strange, mysterious chord comes wandering upon our ears from some instrument, the existence of which we have forgotten and the position and import of which we cannot recall.

It is as though, when life is at the fullest and richest and ripest, and our thoughts and sensations had carried us beyond the memory that there was anything on earth but life, some angel of death, straying by unawares, put his trumpet to his lips and blew a careless note of renunciation for the hour when he should have to awaken the dirge.

Agnes saw that something disturbed her lover's mind.

"What is it?" she said. "Tell me what it is? You look strange!"

"Ah!" he said, snatching off the momentary feeling of uneasiness and looking his brightest at the sweet, young face below. "I've come all the way from London without sleeping. Agnes, and I suppose I am a bit knocked up. I'll be all right to-morrow."

"You must," she said; "you must, my love. Mr. love must always be well. Promise me, promise me!"

She clung to him imploring.

"I intend being a kind of by-word for health, as you are a kind of proverb for beauty," he said, lightly and gallantly, with his vivid, reassuring smile. "When I get to be about a hundred and eighty or a hundred and ninety years of age, and have lost a little of my taste for violent outdoor exercise, I shall write a book on hygiene, embodying all your recipes for blackberry jam, kalecanon, and so on. I shall dedicate the book to you, and both of us, having become famous on the spot, shall set up a great sanatorium at Tramore, and live happy and respected to a good old age. Where's your father?"

"Oh, my love! it is good to have you here!" she cried, clinging to him still.

He stooped and kissed her once more.

"Let us have no clouds to-day," he said.

"No clouds evermore," she said; "not one."

"Not one," he repeated. "Not one, my Agnes!"

"Father," she said, "is in the top of the tower. Come up!"

The two passed down to the end of the hall, went up two flights of stairs, then through a long passage leading to the first floor of the tower, then up a spiral staircase in the thickness of the tower wall until they reached the top floor, at the door of which they knocked and entered.

The old man was seated alone, looking out of the western window. He arose, and, walking feebly towards the young man and taking him

by both hands, called him his dear son and bade him welcome.

For a while the conversation was general—about the young man's journey, the friend he had brought with him for a holiday, the events of the town since he had been last there, the agitated state of the country, the weather and prospects of the harvest.

"And now, sir," said Fitzgerald, when the conversation flagged, "I have come to you first of all, for two reasons—one you will understand."

He took Agnes's hand in his and raised it to his lips.

"I know," said the old man, softly. "God bless you both!"

"My second reason for coming is to ask for your advice and assistance. I have, as you know, come into the property of my granduncle, Timothy. I intend selling it out and investing the money I get for it in Indian Railway Stock, and I wish to ask you if you know anyone who would buy it, and if you would be kind enough to give me your advice upon the whole subject."

"I think," said the old man, "you are quite wise to sell if you can get a buyer; but that will be a great difficulty just now. Stay! Is not the property near the Slate Quarries?"

"Yes," said Fitzgerald; "it joins O'Grady's property there."

"Oh!" said the old man, "I think you are very lucky; for I have heard that O'Grady has some money he wants to invest in land."

"Then, sir, I have the very thing for him," cried Fitzgerald, joyously, rising in his excitement and walking up and down the little chamber.

"If you like," said the old man, "I'll drive out to O'Grady's to-morrow and ask him if the report is true, and mention the fact that you are willing to sell."

"I should feel very much obliged to you, indeed, sir, if you would," said the young man. "And while you are there I shall be engaged in legal matters; for I telegraphed from London to Flynn, the attorney, that I should be with him to-morrow to know how matters stood."

The business of the morrow having been thus arranged, the conversation once more fell into ordinary channels, and was carried on without any feature of interest. At last the waiting light warned Fitzgerald that it was getting late. He looked at his watch. It was a quarter past seven.

"I must run away at once," he said.

"Will you stay and have something with us?" said the old man.

"I cannot," said Fitzgerald. "You forget my friend. He is my guest, you know. I ordered dinner at seven, and it is now a quarter past. I mustn't stay a minute longer."

"Well," said the old man, "when you have dined come up and smoke a pipe with me, and bring your friend. I promise him, if he comes, what he never, perhaps, tasted in all his life before—a glass of genuine ten-year-old Jameson. He may have often heard of the thing, and he may have often tasted something which he was told was it. But this is the real thing. I have had it myself for eight years."

"Very well, sir; if he'll come I'll bring him. Good-bye till then. Won't you show me the way down, Agnes?" said Fitzgerald. "I almost forgot my way out, 'tis so long since I have been here."

"Now, now, now, now!" said Mr. Fail. "Go with him, Agnes, and show him the way lest he might get lost."

The lovers left the room together, and great a hurry as Fitzgerald was in, it took him a whole minute to say good-bye in the hall.

When he turned his back on the West Gate, he walked swiftly to the hotel, entered the coffee-room where dinner was to be served, and asked:

"Has Mr. Manton come back yet?"

"No, sir," said the waiter. "Shall I serve the dinner?"

"Not until Mr. Manton comes," answered Fitzgerald, aloud, adding to himself, "I wonder what can have happened to him. Anyone could understand why I have been late. But what has become of him?"

CHAPTER X.

A PECULIARITY OF FITZGERALD'S.

George Manton was half an hour late for dinner. When he came in he seemed worn and terribly depressed. The earlier portion of the dinner passed off almost in complete silence. Fitzgerald had much to say; and would gladly have spoken, but that he saw his friend was in no humour for conversation.

When the waiter had left them finally, Fitzgerald resolved to make one other attempt upon George's confidences. He said:

"Had you not some kind of business in coming here, George, or was I mistaken in thinking there was some link between you and this town?"

"There is a link," said Manton; "a most unhappy link!"

"Now that you are here," said the other, "in my own town, every brick of which I know, every face in which is familiar to me, and where I have a hundred friends, from the mayor down to the bellman, will you not try and find out if I can be of any use to you, even though you will not tell me your secret?"

Manton sipped his coffee, and shook his head, but said nothing.

"Upon my word," said Fitzgerald, "it is very hard that you will not let me try and be of some service to you. You know I would do anything I could for you. Two heads are better than one. Have, anyway, the courage to ask me to do something for you. There is scarcely a man in Clonmore upon whom I could not bring influence to bear."

Manton looked up and made a gesture of dissent.

"There may be but one man in Clonmore upon whom you could exercise so influence; if there is but one, I am sure it is with him I have to do. I know, Fitzgerald, you would do anything you could for me. I will now go further, and say I know that in this affair you could do much for me, but there are reasons which close my mouth, and which make it impossible for me to accept your help!"

Fitzgerald shifted himself uneasily on his chair. This was really too bad. From what Manton had said, it was clear that the chief portion of the difficulty was financial; and here was he, Fitzgerald, with a large sum of money close at hand. Before he received the money from O'Grady, supposing O'Grady were willing to buy, some time must elapse. The legal matters connected with the affair would consume weeks. He never had a large sum of money by him. The quarterly payments which reached him from Dublin never exceeded a very modest figure. But now it was known that he was about to sell out the Clonmore property, and that he would be in ample funds shortly, he could have no difficulty in borrowing a large amount if he needed it. Flynn could no doubt lend him, or get him, a thousand pounds in a few days, and one thousand pounds out of ten was not much. He had no notion of how much Manton wanted, but he felt sure it could not be more than a thousand pounds.

Yes; when he went to Flynn to-morrow he would ask him to get him a thousand, or say twelve fifty, for he should want a little money for himself. That was the best thing to do. When he had the money he could put it into George's hands, and declare he would never speak to him again if he had refused to accept it as a loan.

In all his life, Michael Fitzgerald had never had a hundred pounds cash in his possession, and he felt a childish delight in the notion of having about him a large sum of money. He had a quick, vivid imagination, and even now, as he sat before his friend, he pictured to himself the many gratifying aspects lent to surrounding objects by the possession of a large amount in cash.

"Thus," said he to himself, "supposing I had a couple of thousand in my pocket in Bank of Ireland notes, I need have no fear of the depreciation of my property below two thousand pounds, anyway. I should have two thousand

pounds safe and sure, for the Bank of Ireland has a Government guarantee, and its notes are as good as gold. Then I should be free to do what I liked, go where I pleased, buy what presents I chose for Agnes, lend a friend a five, or a tennor, or fifty, for that matter, live like a great lord for a month, or turn miser with the hope of being able to amass a small fortune by the aid of prudent speculation, compound interest and penury. I could buy a horse, or a cutter, or, what would be most delightful of all, I could keep my money in my pocket, where I might place my hand on it every five minutes, if I liked, spend it recklessly in imagination, and when at the end of the day I had, in fancy, bought and enjoyed, I could put it under my pillow at night with the gratifying assurance that it was safe and undiminished, and waiting now, and should wait—most delicious fancy of all!—to buy a home for my Agnes! Shakespeare, or some other poet, says the brave man dies but once, the coward many times! The man who lives from hand to mouth may be said to get but once the value of his sovereign; the rich man may spend his sovereign over and over again. The former must buy bread and milk and mutton with his money; he has no alternative; there is no speculation in his money. But the rich man, the man who has a sovereign beyond his daily needs, may resolve in the evening to buy next day a book or a print, and that evening enjoy all the pleasures of hope, which are greater than the pleasures of possession, and yet in the morning may change his mind and buy a whip or a cartridge belt, or may merely think he will buy them, and next day change again his mind, and so on."

It was one of the peculiarities of Fitzgerald's mind, and indicated a somewhat primitive nature, that abstract facts of a pleasant kind gave him little delight. Thus it was the jingle of five sovereigns in his pocket would seem to him a greater assurance against want than the mere symbol in a bank-book of a thousand pounds to his credit. Part of the charm of his character arose from its direct simplicity. He had a way of always perceiving the material view of any situation, and although he usually treated things and circumstances in an imaginative or humorous way, the most delightful and amusing passages in his conversation were those in which he regarded whimsically the homely objects and acts of everyday life. Things which were nearest to him always crept into his talk and dominated it largely. His boots, his hat, his coat, the pencil he had bought for a penny, the pocket-knife for which he had given half a crown, the stone over which he stumbled, the dog someone had offered him for sale, the bracelet on his sweetheart's arm, the rose in his sweetheart's hair, Agnes's eyes, supplied him with more subject for conversation than the history of the world or the theories of all its philosophers.

Constituted as he was, the fact that Manton, his dearest friend, was suffering, and would not speak to him of his sufferings, hurt him as if the harm were his own. Although his own affairs were in such an eminently satisfactory condition, and although when he was alone with the matters of his own heart it beat to the finest rhythmic measures of hope and joy, whenever his eyes or mind turned on Manton, he forgot all his own causes for happiness, and could not banish from him the pain and sorrow caused by the spectacle of his friend's distress. Fitzgerald told Manton of the promise he had given Mr. Fail, and that if they were to go they should go now, as it would soon be late.

Manton, who in his uneasiness and perplexity and fear would have preferred any ordinary company to the society of Fitzgerald alone that particular evening, expressed his willingness to accompany his friend and make the acquaintance of the man who was to be his host's father-in-law, and of the woman destined to be his dearest friend's wife.

It was close to nine o'clock when the two men issued from the hotel, and, arm in arm, walked to the West Gate.

CHAPTER XI.

MANTON WRITES HOME.

THEY were admitted by a servant, and shown into a comfortable dining-room on the ground floor, where they found Mr. Fail seated alone. Some of the promised whisky was in a decanter on the table, with jugs of hot and cold water, and wine glasses and tumblers and sugar and lemon. There were also pipes, cigars and matches. The old man rose as the two friends entered, and said, upon introduction to Manton:

"I am happy to meet you, sir. I am glad to find you entertain no absurd notions about the insecurity of the person in this country, and that you have not been afraid to trust yourself amongst us. I know we are not as quiet or settled here as we might be, but I do not think during the few hours you have been in town you have seen anything to cause you uneasiness, and I hope, and am almost sure, that however long you may favour us with your presence, you will experience nothing more unpleasant than you have noticed up to this. Sit down; you must be tired. Michael has told me that you and he came all the way from London without resting."

"I am sure, sir," said Manton, "I am much obliged to you for your kind words and wishes, and I can say no more for your town than that the two people of it I have met, yourself and Mr. Fitzgerald, give me every reason to think that I shall never experience anything but good-natured kindness and frank hospitality in it."

"Now," said Fitzgerald, lightly, "don't be so awfully grand, Manton. If you go on rounding sentences in that calm and beautiful manner, we shall have to throw into our welcome a little grievous bodily harm in order to see the quality of your eloquence under excitement."

The old man laughed softly, and said:

"That is also intended for me, Mr. Manton. I own I have the weakness of rounding my sentences; but I am afraid it is one of the vices of our race, and you must take it with us and all our other vices if you will take us at all."

"Now, that we are here," said Fitzgerald, "and that Mr. Manton has come to us to amuse himself and improve his health, a thought occurs to me."

"Gentlemen," said the old man, "let me recommend you before you go into anything so serious as thoughts to try this whisky. If, sir, you will take my advice," said he, addressing Manton, "you will take it warm and stiff. I am aware that cold and weak is the new order; but a little hot and stiff goes further in the way of comfort than a great deal cold and weak. No doubt cold and weak would be very good if people did with very little of it, but that's where the evil lies. The very making of punch, the necessary delays and pauses, are friends of comfort and foes of intemperance. There is another speech for Mr. Manton. Fill your glass."

"I shall take your advice, sir," said the guest, "and try it stiff and warm."

The men sat at an old-fashioned, round, mahogany table, which could be enlarged to meet the demands of hospitality by means of leaves let into the middle, where it opened. The old man had by his side, on a tray, four enormously thick Irish clay pipes, and during the evening he observed an invariable custom with regard to these. When he had smoked one he knocked out the ashes, cleaned the pipe of the unsmoked tobacco, and while the thick bowl still retained a strong heat, he re-filled it, and replacing the pipe on the tray, lit pipe number two. This, when empty, he treated in the same way as the former one, and then took up number three. Later in the evening, he explained his reason for doing this. He said:

"If you fill the pipe when it is cold, the tobacco, being of different degrees of density and dampness, burns unequally and with an unequal flavour; but by carefully loosening the tobacco first and pressing it softly and evenly into the hot bowl, all the superfluous moisture is driven off and you have a homogeneous mass of dry tobacco, yielding a uniform flavour, and which

will burn freely down to almost the very bottom of the bowl."

When they had filled their glasses, Mr. Fail said:

"And now, Michael, what about these thoughts of yours?"

"They are not very profound," said Fitzgerald. "It occurred to me that as I shall be busy with Flynn to-morrow, and you are going over to O'Grady's, you might take Manton with you and show him all there is to be seen there. The drive from this to O'Grady's is one of the most beautiful in the neighbourhood."

"I sincerely hope," said the old man, cordially, "that you will come with me. An outside car is a poor conveyance in bad weather, but at such a time as this it is the most delightful means by which two friends can travel. You will not, I hope, refuse to come. I answer for O'Grady, you will be heartily welcome. He is one of the most jovial and kindly-hearted landlords in the county."

"Nothing could give me greater pleasure than to go with you," said Manton.

It was a relief to him to think that, to-morrow, a few miles should be placed between him and Edward Pryce.

The details of to-morrow's drive having been arranged, another pipe smoked, and some ordinary matters discussed, the three men rose, and went into the drawing-room, where Agnes was sitting.

"My daughter, Agnes; Mr. Manton, Michael's greatest friend."

Manton looked at the girl. She turned her face upon him, and that soft, tender look of regretful melancholy which so touched the hearts of all who saw it came upon her features as she held out her hand to him.

He was seized with surprise and amazement. He had often heard of her from Fitzgerald, but not with any elaboration of detail; and he had always pictured to himself a typical Irish beauty, with black hair, bright blue eyes, and pink and white complexion, the very picture of rustic health. What a contrast was here! Dark hazel eyes, dark brown hair, long oval face, olive complexion, and lips but faintly tinged with colour, and which seemed always on the point of speaking words of exquisite and delicate sympathy. He had never seen so mobile a woman's face before. The one look she had given her lover as he entered told the whole idyllic nature of her love. The one look she gave him and the changes wrought in her expression by the announcement that this was her lover's best friend told the whole story of her benevolent devotedness. He had never seen such a face before. He had never seen any other face which so transparently revealed the spirit beyond it, and he had never in all his life dreamed of so sweet a spirit as that one now revealed.

Had he been an unmarried man, and had she been fancy free, it may have been he would there and then have surrendered his heart to her. But he was a married man and loved his wife dearly, and had no thought of love save such as he gave her, and no desire for love save what she gave him. And then, this girl before him was Fitzgerald's sweetheart—was in short time to be the wife of Fitzgerald, his dearest friend, so that love was doubly out of the question on account of one reason, as finally as on account of the other.

But he could not resist the fascination, which all who met her experienced, and it was brought more closely to him than to any other man living except Fitzgerald himself, because he, Manton, was Fitzgerald's greatest friend, and by reason of his friendship and sympathy with the lover, he was able more acutely to appreciate the overwhelming influence a nature such as hers would have on the gentle, vivacious, chivalric gentleman whom he had known for years.

When the men went into the drawing-room that night it was late. There was time for little more than the introduction and leaf-taking.

When the two men were in the street, Manton said:

"That is incomparably the most lovely creature I have ever seen in all my life!"

"And the best?" said Fitzgerald, softly.
 "Goodness," said Manton, "is to my mind an essential element of loveliness. She is most exquisite on everything!"

"If I thought I had won her by any merit of my own, I might feel indisposed to listen to your praises of her. But as the merit is all on her side, you may go on as long as you please, and you will find only too patient a listener in me."

That night George Manton wrote a long letter to his wife. He told her he had met Edward Pryce; that portion of the letter was dull and depressing. He told her he had met Agnes Fair; that portion of the letter was an ecstatic rapture.

CHAPTER XII.

IN THE BANK PARLOUR.

NEXT morning after breakfast Fitzgerald sought Flynn. He explained to him his position and desires. He told him he intended to sell the property, and that he hoped to get for it at least ten thousand pounds. Flynn said he thought that if a buyer could be had at all, the price asked would be easily obtained. The difficulty would be to find anyone willing to make a bid in face of the present unsettled affairs of the country. Fitzgerald told him what his future father-in-law had said about the likelihood of finding a purchaser in Walter O'Grady, and that Mr. Fail was that day to drive to Glenary House, see O'Grady, and find out if he was disposed to buy.

"In the meantime," said Fitzgerald, "I am in want of money. I suppose you could get me some?"

"No doubt," said the attorney. "I can get you some. How much do you want?"

"Twelve fifty!"

"Ah, that is a large sum!" said the attorney, rubbing his chin thoughtfully. "I could not manage so much myself, and some legal formalities, which will take a little time, must be gone through before we could mortgage or deposit the deeds as security." The attorney stood up, and going to the window to refresh his mind, as it were, said, after a moment's pause, "I dare say the bank would give us the money on your personal security; they know you have come in for the property, that it is unencumbered, and that their money would be quite safe. When do you want the cash?"

"To-day, if possible," said Fitzgerald. "Do you think you can manage it for me?"

The attorney came back from the window briskly, saying:

"There's this morning's 'Freeman's Journal.' Amuse yourself with it, while I put on my hat and run over and see the manager."

The attorney left the room. Fitzgerald took a chair by the window and sat down. He took up the paper and looked over it for awhile, but he was too much excited to pay much attention to what he read, and after a little time he put down the sheet and amused himself by looking out. It was a very quiet part of the town. Few people, and still fewer vehicles, passed by. In less than half an hour he saw Flynn returning from the bank. As the lawyer reached the middle of the roadway, there was the sound of approaching hoofs and wheels, and he had to quicken his pace to get out of danger. Before he reached the near kerb a side car drove by, on the off side of which sat Philip Fail, and, fronting Fitzgerald, George Manton.

Fitzgerald raised the window sash, and waving his hand, called out:

"A pleasant day to you!"

Manton returned the salute, and replied:

"Thank you!" just as they passed out of hearing.

The old man turned round on the car and asked:

"What was that, Mr. Manton?"

"It was Fitzgerald," returned the other, "wishing us a happy day."

"Ah!" said the old man, "and I hope for his sake we may meet good fortune."

The attorney re-entered his office with an amused expression of face.

"By Jove!" he cried, "Mr. Fail was very near running over me. He has a stranger with him. I'm not a bad specimen of a Tipperary man" (Mr. Flynn was more than six feet high), "but the stranger with Mr. Fail could give me inches and beat me. Do you know him?"

"Oh, yes! I know him very well. He is a great friend of mine, an Englishman. He came over here with me for his holidays, and as I knew I should be busy with you to-day I packed him off to Glenary with the old man. What do they say at the bank?"

"They'll let you have the money on your promissory note at three months. I suppose that will do?"

"Splendidly!" cried Fitzgerald, with exultation. "And when can I have it?"

"To-day," answered the attorney, "if you like. I bought the stamps as I came, believing you would accept their offer. I'll get them filled up for your signature in a moment."

The attorney rang a bell; a clerk entered. He handed the clerk the stamps, and gave him the necessary instructions. The clerk left, and in a few minutes returned with the notes ready for signature. Fitzgerald affixed his name. Flynn said he would accompany him to the bank; the two set out, were most courteously received by the manager, who said he would be delighted to accommodate Mr. Fitzgerald.

"Shall I credit you," said he, "with the twelve fifty, and give you a cheque-book, so that you may draw the money as you want it?"

"I do not understand you," said Fitzgerald, looking in perplexity from the attorney to the manager.

"He means," said Flynn, "do you wish him to open an account for you—to put the money to your credit, so that you may draw cheques for it as you want it?"

"Oh!" said Fitzgerald, "is that it? I thought I could have the cash to-day—now."

The two business men looked at one another for a moment in surprise.

"Do you want all this money to-day, Mr. Fitzgerald?" asked the attorney. "It is a large sum to have by you in cash."

"Well," said Fitzgerald, "I shall dispose of the greater portion of it this evening."

"Would it not be safer," said the manager, "to let us credit you with the sum? You can draw a cheque for the greater portion of it, or for all, and hand or send the cheque to the person who is to receive the money. We will, of course, pay the cheque the moment it is presented."

"I would much prefer having cash," said the young man. "I would not care to make the payment I am referring to by cheque."

Again the two business men looked at one another. There was a pause, in which a slight look of disapproval came into the faces of both. The attorney was the first to recover his serenity. He said:

"Oh! I suppose Mr. Fitzgerald can have the cash. Can he not?"

"Certainly," said the manager to Flynn, "if you will lodge the note in your own name, and draw a cheque for the sum."

The attorney rubbed his chin thoughtfully. It was his gesture whenever perplexed or confronted with a difficulty. After a few moments, he said:

"Yes; that will be all right. I'll lodge the note, and draw against it."

In a quarter of an hour the transaction was completed, and Michael Fitzgerald left the bank with twelve hundred and fifty pounds in notes in his pocket.

It is the rule in Irish banks not to take the numbers of notes issued. In this case there was no exception to the rule.

When the attorney and Fitzgerald were in the street, the former turned to the latter, and said:

"I hope you have not been betting?"

"No!" laughed Fitzgerald. "You may make your mind easy on that point. I never laid a shilling on or against a horse in all my life. I never had a betting transaction of a sovereign

since I was born. You must not ask me for what I want this money. That is a secret. I assure you it is for no disgraceful purpose, nor for any old, disgraceful act of mine."

"But," said the attorney very seriously, "while I am quite certain it is for nothing disgraceful, I hope you will not be offended with me if I say that young men are often unwise with their money."

The young man paused, and, looking up into the face of the attorney, said quietly:

"There are many kinds of wisdom in the world, and worldly wisdom is not always the wisest. The business of some men is to make money; the business of other men is to make happiness. I think if you acquit me of wanting this money for any evil purpose, I could not expect more of you, even if I told you what I want it for. Therefore, no useful object could be served by my telling you. You are not offended at my reticence?"

"Offended! My dear sir! I was only anxious to protect you and your interests, if I might. You have a perfect right to do what you please with your money, and to keep your own counsel."

Fitzgerald held out his hand to the attorney. "You have done me a great kindness to-day, Mr. Flynn. I shall not soon forget it; and by-and-by I may tell you what I wanted this money for."

"Believe me," said the attorney, "I have no curiosity beyond my desire to serve you. Rely upon that."

The two men shook hands cordially, and parted. As the attorney walked back to his office, he said to himself: "That young man won't be long getting through whatever O'Grady gives him for the land!"

(To be continued.)

MAN is born to be in society; his first duty is towards society. This duty becomes in some a deep sentiment, in others a pretext for attaining their own interested ends; with all, its accomplishment is the object of a real or simulated respect. The obligations which it imposes may sometimes be ill understood and ill reasoned, but we may well conceive that the rules which they trace may become, in ardent minds, equivalent to an article of faith. Now, the political principles of our times being associated with the sentiment of a duty of which society expects the fulfilment, it is easy to understand the power of action which these principles can exercise in their adherents. I shall not, then, hesitate to say that, in politics principles govern parties, and are to them what passions—taken in a good as well as evil acceptance—are to individual men. The passions take possession of those who give themselves up to them—they impel, they attract, they direct them; resistance becomes a provocation to new efforts, success an encouragement toward further advantages. A political principle finds in its adherents the same devotion and the same docility. The useful object which it holds forth to them inflames their hearts and kindles their imaginations; it guides them like a chief, it commands them like a master, and makes whatever force it finds in their souls, whatever power in their understandings, subservient to its designs. It is a belief which triumphs over death in those who have faith in it; it is a religion which, though earth-born, can, like that which came to us from heaven, produce its confessors and its martyrs. It has its mysteries also, and these are not known to all till in the day of success. For anyone who understands the human heart, for anyone who has reflected upon the almost magical effects which great thoughts can operate upon him, true or even false, when they connect themselves with questions of social interest, and are capable of giving birth to great actions or of making noble virtues shine forth—for such a person enough has been said to prove that every political principle which agitates men in masses, leads them, governs them, and necessarily impels them towards the object which it proposes.—PRINCE POLIGNAC.

A SHADOWED LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"A Promise Fulfilled," etc., etc.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

CHAPTER I.

It is the old adage—"Happy the bride whom the sun shines on!"—invariably proved true, there would never have been a happier one than Helen Fleming, on whose wedding morn earth, sea and sky seemed to have conspired together to produce a day of unequalled splendour and beauty to do honour to her nuptials.

Not a cloud dimmed the serene azure of the empyrean vault; the wind that "kissed the sea" was of the gentlest; while on the land flowers and trees bloomed forth in a prodigal display of blossom, and birds made the air vocal with their jocund trills amid the unfolding glories of their native woods.

On such a morning in May, Clarence Escott led Helen Fleming to the altar of the village church which had seen her christening, and there vowed to "love, honour and cherish" her "until death did them part!"

"For better—for worse!" How often the words are lightly repeated, parrot-wise, after the priest, with no thought for the awful possibilities which lie hidden in their grasp.

These two had so taken one another, and for them, judging by the outside of things, one could be forgiven for doubting that there would be any "worse." Their future looked as bright as their wedding day; "hope told a flattering tale," indeed, for them, as they stood, so handsome, so well-matched in all respects, so admirably adapted to each other's requirements, on the threshold of their life journey together.

He was a rising London physician, ten years older than Helen, whose name was beginning to be quoted as an authority in diseases of the heart, his speciality; a man of infinite tenderness and patience in his profession, and renowned for his geniality and great social qualities outside it.

His appearance, too, was prepossessing. Of a tall, manly build, his features clear-cut and aristocratic, his hands white, supple, powerful, as a doctor's should be, his voice sweet and gentle, always courteous in manner, and studiously careful in his attire, his tout ensemble was such as to prove a ready passport to the favour of all, and to win him the affection and confidence of those to whose lot it fell to become intimate with him.

Nor had fortune been a niggard to him, as she too often is to those who deserve best at her hands. His practice was an extensive and an extending one, and at the lowest computation must, at the period of his marriage, have been worth some thousands a year. He had, moreover, the entrée of the first West-End circles, and could, had he so pleased, have selected a bride from a much higher grade of society than that to which Helen belonged. But he preferred love to gold in the choice of a wife, and as his whole being succumbed to her attractions at first sight, he never dreamt of allowing her want of fortune to weigh a feather's weight in the scale against her, but sought her hand with a simple earnestness and entire abnegation of self which said volumes for his innate nobility of character, and won her devoted love.

She was a stately maiden of twenty when they first met, with jet black eyes and hair as dark, decidedly over the average height, and as decidedly above the average in the matter of figure and looks. The rounded outlines of the straight, lithe form, the perfect oval of the face, with its classic purity of feature, were certainly not things to be seen every day. No bad model would she have made for her great archetype, Helen of Greece, so far as her physique went; morally, she was as different as light and darkness from that famous beauty.

Born and bred in a quiet country village, while partaking somewhat of its innocence of



["HUSBAND!" SHE SAYS, IN A PLAINTIVE WHISPER, "I HAVE COME BACK TO YOU."]

evil and simplicity of aim in life, she had, thanks to companionship with an unusually refined home circle, none of its rusticity. Au contraire, she was as distinguished in manner and tone as if she had been brought up in the society of the bluest blood in the kingdom, and there was no danger of her bringing discredit on Dr. Escott's taste in her position at the head of his household.

Possessed of great sweetness of temper, softness of disposition, and capacity for affection, she had, in addition, one trait in her character, which some insist is inseparable from true love—she was inclined to jealousy.

"There is no love without jealousy" is an axiom believed in to the letter by those who are subject to its influence. Whether we who are naturally superior to the feeling need subscribe thereto is an open question which we believe will be pretty generally negated. However, in the case before us, it had been well for husband and well for wife had it never existed.

A doctor's business makes him the confidant of many, and he has letters from, and appointments with, persons of the most varied types, from the peer to the peasant, that it is possible to imagine; and frequently he is the depository of family and other secrets which it is out of his power, if an honourable man, to discuss even with a wife.

Loving Helen deeply, fondly, Dr. Escott took it for granted that she loved and trusted him unreservedly in return; nor had he the slightest conception of the strange unrest which seized upon her very soon after the waning of

the honeymoon, for for a long time she succeeded in hiding to a great extent her animus against those calls upon his attention which he did not speak of openly to her, nor did he get an insight therein until one evening when he had to leave her, much against his will, to see a patient, whom she took it into her head was a lady notorious in the musical world for a plurality of husbands.

Of this woman she had heard that she was a fascinating Circe, whom it was impossible for men to resist, and who was suffering from heart complaint, it was said; and, womanlike, jumping to the conclusion that because her husband would not state where he was going, he had been summoned to see her, she gave way to the most absurd grief at his absence, nor could she have been very much more upset if he had actually eloped.

He came home to find her prostrate with exhaustion, completely worn out with the violence of her emotions, and, in his amazement at hearing the cause, spoke words of stern wrath she had never thought to hear, nor he to address to her. Thus did their first rupture take place. Alas! that it was not also the last!

So far from being the last, however, it was but the prelude to others, for, the ice once broken on the subject, Helen seemed to have lost all sense of shame in the matter, and would accuse him in the most reckless manner of all kinds of neglect and putting of slights upon her, which were manifestly imaginary on her part, but which roused his anger, nevertheless.

CHAPTER II.

GRADUALLY, very gradually, a partial estrangement had grown up between the doctor and his beautiful wife, which wanted but a very little additional force to make a complete one; for though Helen had her fits of repentant remorse for her unfounded jealousies, and Clarence was only too ready to grant forgiveness even to the "seventy times seven," still the constant dropping will wear the stone, and sometimes it seemed as if his patience were fairly exhausted, so trying was the strain brought to bear upon it daily, and that one more outbreak on her part must sever the links of an affection more durable than that of most, weakened as it was by the numerous previous jars inflicted by rough usage upon its delicate construction.

He grew sad of heart and careworn of face as time went on and brought no amelioration of circumstances for him. His eyes lost its brightness, and his smile its spontaneity; he began to stoop and to have the look of a man burdened with heavy anxieties, until the world asked in wonderment, "What had come to its favourite physician?"

In the fifth year of their wedded existence a babe was born to them, who would, its father hoped, re-ement the bonds of their union; and this it did for a time, while the novelty of its presence lasted. When Mrs. Escott got used to that she began to torment herself anew in the old way, even dragging the helpless child as a factor into their dissensions, until all idea of home, as home, began to vanish into thinnest air for the doctor.

The baseless passion, like every other evil habit, grew upon Helen without her being aware of its deepening hold. To "see ourselves as others see us" is given to few; certainly not to those whose mental vision, distorted by a vicious propensity, leads them to view men "as trees walking." Helen Escott would have shuddered to behold a "counterfeit presentment" of her moral self, and with difficulty only would she have been convinced of the truth of the likeness. But her "eyes were blinded," and she realized not what bystanders so plainly beheld—that she was responsible for her own sorrows, the destroyer of her own peace.

Things were in this state between them, when one day Mrs. Escott, going hastily into her husband's consulting-room, found it locked against her. She might probably have thought little of the circumstance had it not been for the fact of hearing the sound of weeping beyond it, and her husband's voice evidently offering consolation to the mourner. Withdrawing at once, she very unwisely set herself to watch who left the house, in order to identify the patient who was closeted with her husband.

It proved to be a lady closely veiled, and very plainly dressed, whom she could not, however, recognize. Making some remark to Dr. Escott about her, he refused to say more than that she was a new patient who had a great trouble to bear, which he hoped to alleviate, if not remove, adding that she lived at Highgate.

From that time it seemed to Helen's jealous vigilance that her husband's time and thoughts were completely engrossed by the requirements of the veiled lady, to the exclusion of all else, and once or twice she hinted as much, to his very evident annoyance.

"Really, Helen, you would madden a saint with your suspicious nonsense! What adequate cause have I ever given you to think so vilely of me?" he cried, irritably, the second time she spoke. "My profession forces me to show all possible kindness to suffering humanity. Surely you do not desire to see me callous and hard-hearted, do you?"

"Certainly not!" was the sullen rejoinder; "but you make such a mystery of everything!"

"My dear, the mystery is of your own making generally. In this case, as in others, I am obliged to be silent for the sake of others, but, after all, there is no mystery attached to it. It is only a sad, sad tale of misplaced confidence which I trust to be able to make end happily. If I thought—"

"What?"

"That taking you into my confidence would prevent your ever again having these unhappy doubts— But, you know, they are things of such frequent occurrence."

The handsome face grew proud and hard as he spoke.

"You must please yourself," she said, turning away coldly. "I have no wish to intrude into your secrets!"

"There! What did I tell you? You will torment yourself with imaginary grievances. What possible good could it do you to know all the horrible things which a doctor is bound to hear? Secrets! Yes, from their very nature they are bound to be concealed by all who are unfortunate enough to be implicated in any degree in them. But it is an honour to be avoided, nevertheless, bringing as it does endless worry and sorrow in its train. Believe me, Helen, you are happier in your ignorance!"

Several times after that it came to Mrs. Escott's knowledge that the veiled lady had called on the doctor, and had remained a much longer time in consultation with him than was usual with his patients; and once he was sent for post haste as he happened to be starting for a scientific meeting, to which he had long looked forward, and at which he was expected to speak.

Without a second's hesitation he gave the order "To Highgate," and was driven off in that direction.

On his return it was out of her power, maddened as she was by jealous fancies, to avoid making a sarcastic allusion to the alacrity with which he had obeyed the summons, declaring that she believed that the claims of royalty would have to give way to those of this patient if they happened to clash.

"Surely Dr. Russell is clever enough to have taken her case, no matter how ill she may be. You have perfect confidence in his skill ordinarily."

Dr. Russell was the medical man who attended for Dr. Escott if he happened to be away or otherwise engaged.

"I have perfect confidence in Russell," was the stern reply. "Nevertheless, you must allow me to manage my own affairs without comment or interference!"

CHAPTER III.

THE child alluded to in the last chapter had arrived at the age of three years, and was to all appearances a healthy, happy little fellow enough, giving every promise of growing up into a fine man, and his mother's heart began to cherish a far deeper affection for him than it had hitherto done. It seemed as if in the constant friction of her intercourse with her husband her love for him was slowly but surely weaving itself out, while towards her son the bond of union grew stronger, developing, however, a passionate element which augured ill for its placidity directly the boy was of an age to thwart her selfish will by a display of attachment to other than herself. She would be as jealous of him as she was of her husband.

"I am sent for to Ramsgate, to old Lord Fordham. I shall catch the eleven o'clock express, and try to get back by the five o'clock; but don't wait dinner for me, dear, as I may stay all night!"

Mrs. Escott looked up from her sewels smiling.

"I should try and stay all night, if I were you, Clarence; the change would do you good!"

He shook his head with a grave look.

"My time is not my own; there are one or two cases that I hardly dare to leave even for the few hours it will take to run down to Ramsgate."

"Oh, nonsense! You make a perfect slave of yourself to a set of hypochondriacs! Why don't you tell them to eat and drink less, and most of their diseases would disappear? For one that is really ill there are dozens who are the victims of fancy. I have not patience with them!"

"You ought to have, my dear," was the dry rejoinder; "you profit so considerably from the

said fancies. However, I must not stop to chatter. Good-bye, my little man," catching hold of the child, who was sitting near his mother busy with a book of coloured pictures, which were the delight of his babyhood; "good-bye. Mind you take care of mamma."

Kissing both wife and child affectionately, he went out and jumped into the hansom which had been hastily summoned from the rank to save time.

"Victoria!" Mrs. Escott heard him say to the driver, as she stood looking out with the child watching his departure.

He looked up, and seeing them, blew kisses to both, which were eagerly returned by the dimpled baby hands in highest glee.

The hours passed uneventfully away until four o'clock. It was a hot, sunny day, and after luncheon the nurse took the child for his usual walk in the park. Mrs. Escott remaining in with the intention of driving out about five.

The nurse came back complaining of the great heat, and saying that the child had a headache, which appeared to increase in severity, notwithstanding the means taken to alleviate it; and so violent did it become that the woman grew alarmed and sent for her mistress to see what she thought was the matter.

Instantly Helen divined that it was no ordinary headache. The flushed face, and sharp, piteous cry, uttered every few moments, and alternating with fits of stupor steadily increasing in duration, pointed to brain mischief of the most serious character, and determined her to telegraph to her husband, making it imperative for him to return at once. Accordingly a message was sent, with a prepaid reply, to the Granville Hotel, and in an incredibly short space of time the answer arrived.

"From Lord Fordham.—Dr. Escott is not here. Has wired to say he is unable to come to-day, but will come to-morrow. He has gone to Highgate."

As Helen sat, half-stunned, with the telegram in her hand, reading it over and over to see if she has misunderstood its meaning, Dr. Russell, who has been sent for, bustles in and asks, "What is the matter?" He looks very grave when he sees the little fellow, and demands, anxiously:

"Where is Escott?"

"That is best known to himself," Helen answers, in hollow tones. "We thought he was at Ramsgate, but I find he is not from this!" And she hands him the ominous pink paper which has so roused her deadliest passions at the supreme moment of her life.

Dr. Russell looks graver than ever as he reads it. He knows sufficient of the wife's besetting vice to understand how dark the aspect of affairs must appear to her. He remarks upon its strangeness as he turns away to attend to the boy, but makes no attempt to solve the mystery.

How the weary hours of that terrible night wore themselves away, Helen never realized. The morning found her pallid with anxiety, and with the torture of the suppressed anger that was eating into her heart. She had at length fathomed her husband's baseness, she thought to herself. All her terrible doubts and fears had proved only too true—else why should he have so deceived her; if there were nothing underground in the matter? No. She was convinced of his baseness. The journey to Ramsgate was a blind to cover his real movements. Probably he was enjoying himself at Highgate while his son lay dying—yes, dying! for the two doctors who had seen him had given no hope of recovery.

Then her mood changing, a passionate yearning welled up within her for his return. If he would only come back in time to save the boy's life she could forgive him anything—anything. Clasp her hands, she cried, dumbly, to the All-Merciful to send her husband home in time.

In vain she prays. The flat has gone forth, "unto dust he shall return." As the neighbouring clocks chime the half-hour after six, a shudder passes over the tiny frame, the hands

are clenched in a momentary convulsion, while the eyes open slowly, once more, before closing for ever, as the spirit leaves its earthly tenement.

An hour later, kneeling in stony despair beside the little rigid form, Helen hears a footstep on the stairs—her husband's! Springing up, she stands confronting the door he will enter, a set, stern look on her face, which makes it like that of a corpse, her eyes blazing with a wrath that chokes her utterance, and her hands clutching the footrail of the bedstead in a futile attempt to steady her swaying figure.

He comes in utterly unprepared for the dread catastrophe, for he has let himself in with his latchkey, and has met no one in the house to enlighten him.

"Helen!" he cries in amazement. "What is it? Are you ill?"

Once, twice, she essays to speak, but no sound issues from the dry lips; the third time she is more successful, for, with a hoarse cry, she bursts out with a lava stream of "words that burn," ay, into his inmost soul!

"You have come back, have you? Come back to gloat over your work! Look! look at him! And, as surely as there is a Heaven above us, know yourself his murderer!"

Dr. Escott leans over the motionless figure in sudden dread.

"Baby!" he wails, recognizing it. "Oh, my God! dead!"

Then he sits down and covers his face with his hands, while agonized tears roll swiftly down. Her words have no meaning for him in the first shock of his grief; they would probably pass from his memory altogether were there no further reference to them on her part. He is accustomed to violent scenes with her, and would attribute the present one to the excess of sorrow making her irresponsible for her actions, but for her returning to the charge with even greater virulence.

"You weep," she says, with bitter scorn, "and well you may! False to your wife! false to your child! You could leave us both in our trusting ignorance, with a smile and a kiss to lull us into security, while in your heart you were meditating schemes of blackest infamy. But your tears will avail you nought with me now. Had you returned in time to save him I would have forgiven even your black perfidy. But he is dead—dead! do you hear? and never—NEVER will I forget or forgive!"

He raises his eyes to her face in bewildered surprise, apparently.

"What are you saying, Helen? Have you fairly taken leave of your senses?" he asks, in a faint voice, as if weak from want of rest. "Cannot your jealous fancies rest even here? Cannot you respect this place—my poor wife?" and he puts his hand out towards her with a caressing gesture and an indescribable pathos in his tone which should have disarmed her, but which has the effect of loosing the floodgates of her wrath still more.

"Respect this place!" she echoes fiercely. "I do respect it when I upbraid you with your villainess. Here, in the presence of the dead, I charge you with the guilt of his blood! Here, I brand you MURDERER!"

"What mean you, woman? Speak!" he exclaims, sternly, rising and seizing her wrist in a grasp like a vice.

"Do you dare to pretend to misunderstand me?" she replies, her tone as stern as his. "Does not your guilty conscience tell you that all is known? The pretended journey to Ramsgate—the real rendezvous at Highgate! When the child was taken ill you were telegraphed for. The answer—"

"Well?" he says, in a hoarse whisper. "What was it? Tell me all!"

She takes up the telegram and reads it to him.

"In what way does that make me my son's murderer?" he asks, with an effort.

"You are strangely dull of comprehension," scornfully. "We knew not where to send for you. Had you been here, I believe the child would have lived. Both Dr. Russell and Dr. Ede thought so. You had been success-

ful in similar cases, and they would have given anything for your assistance. Instead of that, you were more pleasantly employed, no doubt."

"Will you kindly define what you mean by a more pleasant employment?" an accent in his voice which strikes her with sudden terror.

"The society of the person for whom you are content to abandon your home—your honour! For whose sake you condescend to the meanness of a lie!" she retorts, passionately.

"And has anything in my past career given you the right to call me a liar? Have I ever deceived you before?"

"How should I know? I have never found you out before, I acknowledge, but you may have done so scores of times."

"Know then, once for all, that I never have deceived you. The present case, black as it looks, is easily explained. I received a message after I left home in the hansom, and, as it was a matter of life and death, I sent word to Lord Fordham, who is also interested in the affair, and went direct to Highgate, where I have been till an hour ago. I come from a bed of death. You can, therefore, judge yourself of the pleasantness of my employment."

"You received a message after you left here?" speaking incredulously. "That is easily said, of course—"

"Mad woman! or, devil!—which are you?" he cries, in a sudden accession of fury, for the words sting him to the quick, and, beside himself with mad wrath, he lifts his hand as if to strike her.

To be doubted thus, cruelly, after all these years, is torturing to his sensitive nature.

"Neither!" comes the answer, in clear, incisive tones; "neither! Only your unfortunate wife, who must bear her lot as best she may."

With a mighty effort he suppresses the passion that threatens to overwhelm him, and for a minute, with dilating pupil and heaving chest, he stands looking at her, beautiful even under the influence of baneful tempest, trying to recall amid all the tumult of his feelings the old Helen he had so loved, that he may have a more tender memory to carry away with him—for it is their parting hour. His next words make this clear to her.

"You are right, Helen; you are my wife, but henceforth only in name. Your lot shall be made as easy as one as possible. In my insane anger I was in danger of forgetting the claim you have on my forbearance and respect. For this I ask your pardon. Hereafter you shall run no such risk at my hands. I despise myself for the unworthy impulse, and to prevent the possibility of its recurrence I will withdraw myself from your life. It will be a fitting punishment for my gross infringement of your rights as a woman. We shall both be happier apart, it may be. At any rate, the plan shall be tried. You will remain here, of course. No material alteration need be made in your style of living, as I desire you to have everything just as you have been accustomed to it. The lawyers shall receive instructions to attend to all money matters for you, and you will go to them in any difficulty. For myself—I shall go abroad. I could not remain in London under the circumstances," his voice breaking suddenly; but Mrs. Escott shows no sign of relenting.

"As you please!" and, with a haughty air and carriage, she leaves him with the dead.

He kneels down where she had knelt before, and lays his lips on the marble fingers, while tears rain down the face that appears to have aged since he entered the room.

"Oh, my little son, is this to be the end of all?" is his heartbroken moan. "I had hoped so much from you—my little one—my treasure! And now all is blank and hopeless! God help me!—a miserable wretch, bereft of all!"

A very few days suffice to place affairs on their new footing, and the fashionable world hears with dismay that its prime favourite, Dr. Escott, is going abroad—"for the benefit of his health" is the plea given, and the "beau monde" wisely remarks that it has long observed that his health was not good, and no

doubt the change is desirable. But it is strange that from the day Dr. Escott is stated to leave the shores of Old England, no one hears anything more about him. That is to say, in spite of his European celebrity, and the world-wide reputation he has made for himself in his particular branch of the profession, no one seems able to say positively to which quarter of the globe he has betaken himself, nor in what direction one would have to look for him if wanted.

Mrs. Escott, when questioned, declares that he is travelling about from place to place—the truth being that she knows no more than any one else where he really is; and even the lawyers who have the entire management of his monetary affairs could not give his actual address, as they only communicate with him through a firm of bankers, who are forbidden to reveal it.

CHAPTER IV.

YEARS roll slowly by, carrying with them the mirages of youth and the hopes of maturer years. A whole decade has passed since Dr. Escott disappeared from London Society, and by this time his name almost is forgotten, washed away from its shifting sands by the tide of popularity in favour of some newer favourite.

It is winter in Montreal. Snow lies thick and dazzlingly white in the streets, rendering them impracticable for aught but sleighs, the jingle of whose bells, borne upward on the frosty air, penetrates even to the topmost story of the tall, shabby-gentle house, let (French fashion) in flats, where, in an ill-furnished, anything-but-weather-proof room, an old man sits, deep in the study of an English journal.

Looking at him more closely, we find he is not so old as he seems at first sight. Probably he has known trouble, and to its account must be laid the silver which mingles so freely in the chestnut locks, and the deep lines prematurely ageing the delicate, patrician features.

Strangely out of keeping with his surroundings he is, in one respect. The room is a hideous garret, with yellow-washed walls, discoloured with damp and the leakage of the roof, the furniture of the most meagre description and quantity, the floor destitute of carpet. The occupant, on the contrary, is well—remarkably well—dressed; his clothes are of the best style and make, his linen is irreproachable, his "chasseur" Parisian. Leaning back in his rush-bottomed arm-chair, his eyes fixed on the handsomely-framed picture on the opposite side of the room—the only adornment it boasts—the paper dropping from his nerveless grasp, he sinks into a reverie in which he forgets the present—forgets his very identity—forgets time, space, everything; a reverie which steals from him twenty years of his life, making him a young man again in the flush of early manhood.

The subject of the painting is a village church embowered in trees, and surrounded by the graves of "the hamlet's dust" for many generations past. As he gazes at it abstractedly, and remembers its close association with his dearest memories, it grows instinct with life, and he almost fancies he hears the bells chiming in the square Norman tower, disturbing the rooks in the tall elm to the left, and sending them caw-cawing across the blue summer sky.

"How she loved to hear them!" he soliloquizes; and what a strange taste he had thought it. How she had missed them when he first brought her to her city home; and so, to reconcile her to the loss, he had had this view of the old church, where her father ministered, and where she had been christened and confirmed and married, painted with a flight of rooks darkening its sky, and giving it just that touch which made it really homelike to her.

His bonnie wife! Would to God he might see her once more ere he dies! He has had the desire in his mind for long to go to her. Perchance he had done wrong to leave her, even though she had so tried and angered him. He

should have borne with her a little longer. In the greatness of her sorrow she had spoken hastily, without meaning one time of what she said; and he, instead of soothing her anguish, had lifted his hand against her—his wife, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh! Oh! how the remembrance sears and stings him, even yet! Coward that he was to do it! Oh! that he might blot it from the past! And she—how has she borne the long years of separation? Does she, too, yearn to look upon his face once again? Or has she found consolation in the society of new friends and fresh employments? He can hardly think that, however; for she loved him once—truly, devotedly loved him. Why, her very faults sprang out of her too great love, and it may be that the parting has strengthened the depth of her attachment, and eradicated the evil weed that grew up beside it.

Why should he not go and see for himself how things are with her? She would be unable to come to him, no matter how willing, for she has but a faint clue by which to trace him, if any. She may know that he is in America, but that must be the extent of her knowledge, for he has confided the secret of his residence to none, and few would identify Doctor Clare, the hospital physician, who is at the beck and call of "all sorts and conditions of men" in that capacity, and whose unofficial hours are devoted to a large private practice—who is regarded as almost a miser by many who cannot understand the necessity for the privations he habitually practices—with the fashionable London doctor who had been accustomed to a sort of fetish worship from his numerous votaries, and who had never known the want of a single luxury. He smiles as he remembers how much he has endured that she might not miss anything she had been used to in her married life. What a hard struggle it was to work his way when he first came to Canada—unknown, friendless, despairing! But he had triumphed at last, and now he can even afford to leave his post for a few months to visit Europe—and see her. He will do it, he determines, his eyes luminous with a light to which they have long been strangers, and, with a pitiful cry, he clasps his withered hands and prays that he may live to do it.

There is a sound of sleigh bells in the street, which stop suddenly as they near the house, following which comes a footstep on the bare, wooden stairs. Higher and higher it mounts, till it has reached the landing outside, but he is too absorbed in thought to notice it; nor does he pay heed to the summons at his door.

Once—twice—the visitor knocks, unheeded. The third time he springs up like one aroused from a trance, and, flinging wide the portal, encounters the tearful gaze of a dark-eyed, dark-browed woman, whose face is strangely familiar in spite of the long, long years since last he looked upon it, and the disfiguring black in which it is framed.

"Husband!" she says, in a plaintive whisper. "I have come to you. Will you let me come in?"

The old man starts back for a moment in his surprise and agitation, as if he saw an apparition; the next he has sunk on his knees before her and is kissing the hem of her robe.

"Not there, Clarence! not there! It is I who should kneel to you. I, who dared to doubt, to defame you! Oh, husband! darling husband, say that you forgive me!" and in wild abandonment she flings herself upon his breast and sobs unrestrainedly.

Veil the scene of their reconciliation. It is too holy for mortals to intrude upon; neither is it for outsiders to be too curious where such deep, such awful, feelings are concerned. Suffice it that those whom "matrimony" had already "made one," were here united in the more lasting union of spirit with spirit.

Never again could they doubt or misunderstand one another; sorrow had done its "perfect work" in Mrs. Escott's nature, and, looking back on the vanished past, she could only wonder how it had ever been possible for her to embitter existence as she had by her jealous frenzies.

"How did I find you, darling?" she says, in

reply to his question. "It was almost without hope of success that I began the search; for I had nothing but the fact that your communications with England all bore the American postmark, to guide me. For eight weeks, ever since I landed in New York, I have followed up the slight trail you gave, with a sinking heart, for when I found that your New York correspondents knew nothing of you, personally, and could only refer me to the firm in Boston from whom they received their instructions, who, in turn, referred me to another somewhere else, I felt hopeless of penetrating the mystery in which you had enshrouded yourself. But my patience was rewarded at last, and I am here."

"What induced you to undertake it, Helen?" he asks, tremulously.

"Accident, dearest. I met Lord Fordham, the young one, I mean—the old one is dead, you know—at Bournemouth, in the autumn, and he had his son with him, such a beautiful child, dear. Walking with me one day, he asked after you, and though I parried his questions as well as I could, he must have heard or suspected something of the true state of the case, for he went on to speak of you in the highest terms, declaring that he owed you a life-long debt of gratitude for preventing him doing what he would ever after have regretted. 'But for him, Mrs. Escott,' he said to me, 'I should have disowned and deserted my dead wife. I blush to tell it of myself, but it is true, that I—godless wretch that I was then—would have repudiated the marriage bond between us, because I had grown tired of it, forsooth! It had taken place in Scotland, and privately, and the confiding, innocent girl I had persuaded to wed me owes it to Doctor Escott that the name on her tombstone in Highgate Cemetery is Fordham.' 'Highgate Cemetery!' I cried. 'When was this?' Then it all came out—how his wife, in the agony of her situation, had come to you, because you knew the family, and how your remonstrances and exhortations had brought him to a better mind, and how she had lived to see herself acknowledged, and her child received into its father's family, though scarcely more than the bare fact, for she had died the same night. And it was from her death-bed you came that terrible morning. Oh, Clarence! can I ever forgive myself for what I said?"

He smiles fondly, as he replies:

"You may darling, now, for I have forgotten it."

An illustration in the "Scientific American" exhibits in a striking manner how the human hand can in the short time of three months deeply impress its grasp on the hickory helve of a hammer used in welding. The hammer, it says, is held loosely in striking, and every blow is attended by a slight motion of the handle under a varying grip. The constant attrition causes the muscles of the palm and fingers to bed themselves, so to speak, in the tough wood, with an impression as perfectly reproducing the inner surface of the hand as would be obtained by squeezing a roll of putty. The oval handle is one inch in its shortest diameter, and where it is worn deepest by the thumb and forefinger only three-sixteenths of an inch of wood remains.

A LADY, accompanied by her sweet, golden-headed little girl of some three or four years of age, was walking recently in a side street in Atlanta leading to a more crowded thoroughfare, when an old-looking man, dressed in shabby, country-made clothes, and who was sitting on a box on the sidewalk smoking a pipe, jumped up, and rushing forth after the child, kindly and admiringly snatched her little hand, exclaiming: "How d'ye do? How d'ye do, baby? Oh, how purty ye look! Goin' ter town, are ye?" and stooping down: "Won't yer give the old man a kiss?" With an apologizing look at the mother, as the little one responded affectionately to his hug and kiss, the old man continued, in a broken voice and with tears: "I had one once—I had one—but" (pointing to heaven) "she's gone—gone up yonder!"

THE FLOOD-WAIF.

A TALE OF THE GREAT MISSISSIPPI FLOOD.

AY, that's the odd little critter, sir—
See how she kicks and crows!
We pilots have sort of 'dopted her,
And Stewardess Nance here knows
As she'll grow up a credit to all on us—
Her fathers are four, that's all.
Hold her up, Nance. The dear little cuss!
Mind out that she doesn't squall.

How did we come by her? Well, you see,
I'll tell yer. The Mississipp
Was more like sea than river, and we
Were out on a rescuing trip—
Tom, Fred, and me, in the "Buttercup,"
With Jakey to boss the bell—
With nothin' but house-tops peepin' up
From the breast of the turbid swell.

We had just finished up with a sunken town,
And skinned off the folks a-perch
On the wave-washed roofs, and were headin' down

Past the peak of a drowned-out church,
With nothing but water and tree-tops seen,
And the farmlands under our keel,
When the "Buttercup" scraped, and began to careen,

With Fred and me at the wheel.

But we'd got her off, and were headin' out,
When Jakey signalled to stop.
"There's a shanty adfoat," I heerd him shout,

"With uthin' kickin' on top!"
"It's poultry," says Tom. "No, a pig," says Fred.

And our guesses were small and big.
But at last, when we came to near the shed,
It was neither poultry nor pig.

It was jist this baby, a kickin' up
Its heels from a sort of trough,
And there warn't a man on the "Buttercup"

But yelled as we yanked it off.
The stewardess, Nance here, gave it milk,
And said 'twas a gal, and then
We seed 'twas as purty and fine as silk,
And we yelled and cheered again.

Well, what was to do? The mother and sire

Were, like enough, drowned, and Nance,
Havin' her own brood, couldn't tire
With a little shaver of chance.

No more could the homeless couples aboard,
Just saved from the overflow,
And none of the deck-hands' wives could afford

Any extra care to bestow.

So Jakey and Fred, and Tom and me,
Bein' bachelors all, agreed
To chip right in as guerdens, and se
To the little thing's every need.
We'll eddicate her and bring her up,
And as for a name—go slow!
Toss her up, Nance. Mebbe Buttercup
Will do at a pinch, you know.

WHEN Sir Charles Lyell, the eminent geologist, was in America, he seems to have had some curious advice given to him about travelling on the Mississippi steamboats. "Never pay your fare until you are compelled to," was the first piece of wisdom thrown at him. "And, pray, why not?" he asked. "Because your chances are greater in time of trouble." "Will you kindly explain yourself, sir?" said Lyell. "Well," answered the American, "when I was travelling up the river last March somebody cried out, 'Passenger overboard!' The captain hurried to the office, and asked, 'Has the man overboard paid his fare?' On being answered in the affirmative, he turned to the pilot and said, indifferently, 'Go ahead; it's all right.'"

DREGS AND FROTH.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

By A. H. WALL.

CHAPTER IV.

ALDERMAN SIR JOHN WEELDON, M.P.

I swear 'tis better to be lowly born,
And range with humble livers in content,
Than to be perked up in a glist'ring grief,
And wear a golden sorrow.

SHAKESPEARE.

In the two years we jumped in passing from the first to the second part of this story, other great changes than those already mentioned have taken place.

The alderman's "blushing honours" have thickened upon him—he is now a knight and a Member of Parliament.

A comfortable ride amidst pleasant woodland scenery on a bright, warm, fresh May morning, to share in the honours of a State ceremony, was the great deed he nobly did for the privilege of wearing knighthood's golden spurs. That blushing honour he wears (without a blush) as proudly as if it had been won, as it was of old, by services to the State or deeds of heroic valour—perhaps more proudly.

Sir John has also the honour of being an M.P. He has a seat in our glorious House of Commons, and is, to use the words of another M.P., "a political unit in the Greatest Legislative Assembly in the World"—but at present only one of those political units whose chief privilege is that of keeping late hours, and suffering consequent ill-health, in the service of their country.

To win honour and privileges so great, he worked very hard. Diligently he sought the applause of the multitude; his name was put forward wherever it could obtain publicity. He lost no opportunity of coming prominently forward in public: he feasted the press, he published pamphlets, and put, not his literary secretary's, but his own name to them as their author, and his oratorical power was carefully cultivated and constantly displayed. He was deeply and widely revered as a great capitalist, he was admired as a successful merchant, and the party he embraced was the popular one. They cheered him at rowdy meetings to his heart's content; his printing bills were numerous and heavy, he employed a whole army of active canvassers and a well-known professional political agent of vast skill and electioneering experience—a clever, quick-sighted, lawyer named Wedderburn, who availed himself craftily of everything that intrigue, local prejudice, individual influence, and personal patronage of a safe kind could command in the cause of his worthy client's election.

This agent said from the first:

"Oh, yes! we can get you in right enough, if you don't mind the cost!"

And he was well within the mark when he named the cost as somewhere about fifteen thousand pounds. It was considerably over that sum. But that was nothing to the alderman, for therefore it followed, as the night the day, that Sir John Weeldon was duly elected M.P.

Here, then, was the long-sought honour at last achieved!

The press and the people glorified him again and again.

Once more he bit his lips and knit his brow to read flattering references frequently made to the great self-made man of the City, who commenced life in so lowly a position and yet had soared so high! Must he never forget the uncomfortable fact that "He was once the errand-boy of a little grocer's shop in the City"?

Still the parvenu is discontented! still he is unhappy! Still must he continue to carve his proud way upward and onward, to win fame and power in what an M.P. of the silent persuasion

once called "the most difficult arena in the world."

The paths of the ambitious are thorny. Sir John is put on committees, and is worked almost to death. The great men of his own party snub him; his merits are either unrecognized or purposely neglected; and when he assayed to electrify the House in a speech to which, after his lights, all due care and preliminary forethought had been given, he somehow lost self-confidence, made some very shocking slips in his grammar, heard them sneered at, lost his temper, grew confused.

Then frequent bursts of laughter, mockery, and sarcastic exclamations plunged him deeper and deeper into a giddy whirlpool of wild excitement and bewilderment. When he sat down he knew neither what he had said nor what he was doing, was only conscious of the one torturing thought—that he had made a fool of himself.

On the following day all the newspapers held him up to ridicule; he was a laughing-stock for half the world.

His eagerness to electrify had been too great; his maiden speech was too ambitious, and had been made too soon.

After that he began to feel as uncomfortably out of place in the House of Commons as he felt in Fashionable Society.

He had sacrificed rest, ease, pleasure, profit, on the altar of his insatiable ambition—and what had he reaped? Only unhappiness and discontent! so far, nothing more. He stood upon the glorious eminence of his pride; but he stood there isolated and alone—restless, fretful, feverish, his temper spoiled, his health and his hopes weakened, embittered, discontented, disappointed, fast becoming habitually irritable and evil-natured. He was a stranger to those quiet joys of the domestic hearth which still haunted his memory; he was without the ties of family affection, without the love of an amiable and beautiful wife, and without his good old stronghold of self-respect.

Was he to "rest and be thankful" here?

Psha! This was but the threshold of his career—there were greater heights beyond, and he would mount and proudly tread them yet! It should be no easy task to conquer and retard the progress of such a man as Sir John Weeldon was. So he imagined.

He came home in the small hours, saddened and thoughtful—to a home so melancholy and deserted-looking that it seemed to contain a corpse awaiting burial. Ghastly images of the sane wife he had sent to a lunatic asylum haunted it. Her favourite chair, her books, her work-table, the musical instruments at which she sat and sang to him, the bed in which she slept, the garden-walk she liked best, and that last, never-to-be-forgotten, terrible scene which followed after the doctors had sent her back to him "cured" of the malady he knew she had never possessed.

Ah! how frequently that scene comes back to him! The weather was wild and gusty; heavy showers fell at frequent intervals, and thunder rumbled and rattled amongst the darkening clouds. Lightning flashes were reflected with increasing frequency from the mirrors in his wife's charmingly decorated dressing-room, before one of which she sat, very still and quiet, her morning dressing-gown carelessly worn, her luxurious and beautiful hair floating about her like an ebon veil. He saw, still sees, the black creaking boughs frantically struggling with the wind outside, and hears its moans and shrieks as he again takes up carelessly a handful of those soft, silky curls, and says, in his memory, as he then said in reality:

"There is not a lady in the land who has such curls as these."

He sees her turn towards him with a strange, wild light in her large eyes, a mysterious expression on her pale face, with a curiously unnatural calmness in her voice and manner; and he hears her say once again, as plainly as if the words were then for the first time spoken:

"It was my hair that first attracted your attention, before I won that which you called your heart!"

"It might well attract anyone's attention,"

he remembered saying; "it is so very beautiful!"

He felt tenderly towards her that morning. It was the morning after his maiden speech. He yearned for sympathy; the old spell of his love was upon him. He knew, too, how cruelly he had wronged her, and in his secret heart he yearned to win forgiveness.

The man who takes ambition for his guide should never cultivate such things as feelings, sentiments and sympathies. The brave knight had done his best to repress them, but they were in his nature, and could not be killed. Are they ever killed?

Upon the table before her were a pair of scissors—a large pair. He never knew whether accident or design had placed them there.

While they were talking she had taken them up.

Suddenly she sprang from her seat, and, retreating as rapidly as he advanced into the shadowy gloom farthest from the window, cut off handful after handful of her beautiful hair, casting them with scorn and bitterness into his face and at his feet, crying out with flashing eyes and wildly heaving breast:

"There, sir—there, sir! They are yours! and would to heaven that I, without offending God, might cast away the life that stands between you and the goal you seek! For, ah, sir! then I would as readily give you my body, with a dagger in its heart!"

She frightened him. He dared not touch her. He believed that now she was really mad, and with her gleaming instruments of mischief might stab him or herself, there where they stood!

She read his thought with a single glance, and controlled her passion with a mighty effort. With the same air of a terribly forced calmness she resumed her seat before the window, and, turning to him with a smile of scornful bitterness, said, slowly:

"I am not mad! There is nothing here that you can distort into a proof of insanity. Short hair is becoming fashionable. You desire me to be fashionable; I obey. Your doctors will not grant you a certificate of madness this time, husband—Sir John; you cannot shut me up again with the mad people for this! The delusion which sent me from home—your home—exists no longer. I know that my father, mother and sister all died at sea; that was my proof of sanity once, and it shall protect me still! Sir John, yes, they died at sea—all died at sea—all at sea; and the sea will give up its dead when we, Sir John, stand side by side before the judgment seat of God!"

They were her parting words, and he shrank from them in silence. No, she was not mad, but she was no longer his! That he knew, then, far away past all doubting.

He heard her utter a low, harsh laugh as he left the room, and he never saw her again.

When he returned home that night she had gone—fled through the storm and darkness—secretly and alone, taking with her nothing but the costly jewels he had from time to time purchased and given to her as presents.

And so, as we have told the story, it all comes back to him from time to time, and often. In the lonely night when, over-excited and fatigued, he vainly tries to sleep; as he sits alone smoking or reading in his library; out in society, where other men's fair and loving wives remind him of his own.

The emotions that such memories awaken seem never to grow weak with time, but stronger, stronger, always stronger!

He says to himself, having in his eyes the while tears of pity for himself:

"I was glad when she came back to me. I thought to win her pardon, so that the past would bury the dead past, and we might be to each other in the future what we once had been in that past which is a dead past, too, dead and childless! Oh! for a draught of what the wretched call nepenthe!"

Thus, in the midst of all the excitement of his battling and triumphing, Sir John remains a discontented, miserable man!

Still comparatively young, and in the full

possession of his vigorous mental faculties and capacities, all the happiness of his life has dwindled away and become but the echo of echoes—memory. Pondering over past, present and future, he has the air of one lost in a maze, hopelessly puzzled, unable to trace either beginning or ending—a way out of the old, or a way into the new. He says:

"Of all men, who should be happier than I am? Of all men, who is more wretched? Why did a wife, who was so true and tender to me in the hours of struggling poverty, who so bravely shared the hard, desperate fighting of my early days—why did she, of all the world, fall from me when victory was assured, and the goal we were seeking was within our view? Why did she, whose duty as a wife, whose love for a worthy husband, should have bound her to me with bonds of steel—she upon whose every feeling of gratitude and respect I have the strongest possible claim—why should she, whom I have loved, protected and cherished, at whose feet I have cast wealth and honour, abandon me, a man of my dignity and greatness, for the sake of those miserably humiliated, worthless relatives who abandoned and degraded themselves, and, but for me, would have degraded me?"

For these and similar questions put to himself, Sir John found no replies.

He began to regard life, as most people who foolishly misuse or misunderstand life do regard it, as something pre-eminently unsatisfactory. He began to think himself shamefully and unjustly treated by it—to nurse a terrible grievance against it—to discover in it nothing good. It gave him pleasure to say bitter, spiteful, abusive, cynical things against it. He felt towards it as men and women do who have systematically hardened their hearts against genial feelings and sentiments against faith and charity, kinship, sympathy, forgiveness, and kindly fellow feeling; against, in short, all things which beget tender emotions and strengthen those soft, sweet, humanizing influences which it is the most important and proudest mission of all pure religion to exercise, direct and develop.

With eyes wilfully closed against all but self and its preservation by that first law of nature which is most glorified by those who reduce it to its thinnest dimensions and shallowest depths, the great Sir John had persistently and consistently carried out those noble principles which little Dr. Dodd realised in his small way by the death-bed of poor Mrs. Grant, to the great satisfaction of his admiring spouse.

There was nothing quixotic, nothing absurd or unnatural, no wild pretensions to self-devotion, self-denial, or self-sacrifice, in the great City knight's matter-of-fact ideas of duties and principles. Gratitude, love, generosity, kindness, sympathy, these were, in him, plants which nourished only the soul which nourished them—self! They were given to contribute to his comfort and happiness, to minister to his greatness and ambition, and not to the wants and feelings of others; they were self-created, and they belonged to self, and they culminated where they began—at home. If he gave in charity, it was of his superfluity; and although, being so wealthy, he gave freely with pleasure and often, he gave money only, and never even gave that without carefully considering how the way of its being given might indirectly best serve himself.

And yet with all this care for self, how very little self had gained!

CHAPTER V.

IN THE VORTEX OF FASHION.

Nothing but feathers, foppery and fashion.
FARQUHAR.

The brilliantly lighted State saloons of the Foreign Office are opened for a grand reception.

With their noble staircase and handsome corridors, this magnificent suite of rooms and ante-rooms are so profusely adorned with choice plants and flowers that, opening as they do, one

into the other, they seem like a series of glorified conservatories.

They are filled to crowding with royal, noble and distinguished guests; with statesmen, ministers and ambassadors; with princes who may be kings hereafter; with the already-crowned monarchs of art, science and literature. Here, mingling without necessarily mixing, we find Society's choicest elements. Here are dukes, earls, marquises, lords, and millionaires; the greatest authors, painters, poets, sculptors, singers, musicians, and actors of to-day; the most lovely of women; soldiers in gorgeous uniforms; ladies of the loftiest rank in all the rainbow glories of their dress, silks, satins, and velvets, with jewellery of astounding value flashing, sparkling, gleaming, and burning in fiery sparks of prismatic hues on snowy bosoms, bare, rounded arms, and soft, white, warm, lazy fingers—with ostentatious of reckless costliness and the most elaborated richness, fantastic conceptions, designed by the most ingenious artists in Europe.

The air is heavy with perfume and filled with sweet music. It is a scene of languorous delight, a realm of fairy-like enchantment, of indolent epicurean enjoyment.

The eminent tragedian whom Society most delights to honour, the most fashionable poet, the composer who has achieved the latest triumph in music, journalists who represent the most powerful organs of the Press, people of the highest eminence, native and foreign—are all here.

To many, being here appears the loftiest honour of their noble crafts and heaven-born genius; to some it is a false, fair show of frothy, frivolous silliness, in which there is nothing earnest, real or true; and to others it is but a source of ill-suppressed envy, spite, malice, and all uncharitableness, for which they find due vent in cynical witticisms, in sneers, and scornful mockery.

Lady Mary Greville is here with her daughter Florence, still, as she was two years ago, radiant and joyous in beauty and fashion, but, alas, unmarried!

She remains, however, the brilliant flame around which lovers flutter and languish and sing their fragile wings; still all the most potent arms of coquetry remain in the arsenal of her attractions, polished and keen, and ever ready for use. She still sits from bachelor flower to flower, reposing for an instant in the bosom of one, and now in that of another, favouring no one to the exclusion of others.

And still Lady Mary sighs, and in her stern and lofty way warns and scolds, but all in vain. Her charming daughter is a self-willed creature, who will dance to no music but that of her own providing.

Men of the highest rank and the proudest eminence, the bravest and handsomest young soldiers, the daintiest darlings of Society, still struggled and crowded about her to solicit the enviable privilege of dancing with her. It was so luxurious a pleasure to press with the closely encircling arm that flexile waist, to feel the warmth and pressure of her naked arm and soft white hand, to be so intimately close to the flashing eye, the flushing cheek, the heaving bosom, as if in mimic proprietorship of all her time-perfected charms.

It was sweet to awaken the music of her laughter, to bring forth the saucy shafts of her wit by the unguarded fervour of flattery, even to be taunted and tantalized by that prettily supercilious indifference with which she threw aside the bleeding fish she hooked and still went angling on for bigger prey, with all her mother's pride and cold, hard-hearted ambition, but without that older and more experienced angler's knowledge of changes and chances in the ways of men.

She sang with the old song, "The conquest I prize, though the slave I disdain," and, trained only for display and attraction, made display and attraction the sole business, the sole delight, of her young and merry life. She shunned thought, she suppressed feeling, she sneered at sentiment, she plunged into the wild vortex of fashionable pleasures, and feared only ennui

and disappointment. She knew all the snares and dangers surrounding her, and daringly laughed at them, loving the wild excitement of her hair-breadth escapes, and confident in her own proud strength.

Sought rather, flattered, worshipped as the young beauty was amongst all the throngs of her admirers, those only whom she esteemed the most eligible still stood aloof, and not a word was heard of marriage settlements.

And was there nothing of real passion, tenderness, or pity, to give a more womanly charm to her grace and beauty? Nothing to spread over the shallow gaiety and artificial excitement of her luxurious career the more refining and elevating influences of romance and poetry? Was she indeed the cold, hard, selfishly ambitious creature her worldly mother had striven so hard to make her?

She believed she was. It was her frequent boast that she had no lack-adisical savings for pensive solitude, love, and sympathy—that she was only miserable when alone; and she was often said there was nothing of the old-fashioned sentimental, romantic miss about her. Lady Mary's practical, matter-of-fact training had prevailed against all the softening powers of refined society and educational accomplishments; her daughter was polished and bright, but metallic and impenetrable. Men of all kinds whispered their guiltiest in her ear. She laughed at them, merely, made pretty mockery of them—they never touched her heart. Conquest intensified her enjoyment, but it gratified only her pride. Bold, daring, fearless, she moved in triumph amongst all the snares spread for her feet—a modern Amazon of Society, slangy, manly, smart, and clever.

So moves she there, at this grand reception, amongst to-day's loftiest representatives in rank, wealth, and talent.

In the midst of a little group of distinguished young men, who are chattering and laughing merrily in the corridor, stands her brother, Captain Montagu Greville, beaming with fun, light-hearted, frolicsome.

And in a convenient corner of the grand staircase his wife is flirting abominably with that "dangerous man" who shares with angels the peculiarity of neither marrying nor giving in marriage, the Frenchman with the large estates and little money, Monsieur Delvaux of Beaucroire.

"You are a cruel man, to come so late when you promised to be so early," says the little golden-haired, blue-eyed, pink-and-white complexioned wife, tapping him with her jewelled fan.

"Ah, madam!" sighs the Frenchman, with a languishing glance, "if I were a bold man, instead of the most shy and diffident of my sex, I could find in your reproach the most exquisite piece of flattery—but, ah! I dare not!"

There is happiness, as well as merriment, in Mrs. Montagu Greville's laugh.

The Frenchman looks into her eyes with an expression that brings a blush to her cheek and thrills her with a touch of fear—a quite delicious sensation, so new—he has such handsome dark eyes, so tenderly expressive.

"Find what you like," she says; "only when you make a promise to a lady, keep it!"

He replies in his own language, half-whispering:

"You make me ashamed! I am wretched! Pray, pray, forgive me! On my honour as a gentleman—on my honour—I did not know that I had promised. I cannot think that I could make you such a promise, and forget it! It seems wildly improbable—impossible! Have you not forgotten—made a mistake? Did you really ask me to meet you here, and early?"

He speaks in tones of anxious earnestness and with a show of the most abject penitence. "She is greatly pleased and flattered." But she exclaims, with mock indignation:

"I ask you to meet me!" And then in a low voice says, coquettishly, and in French: "Why, no! I did not, monsieur. But I said I should be here, and you said the same, and

then we both said 'Early!'—was not that a promise?"

And then their eyes spoke, and they understood each other from that time forth; and she, in trepidation, looked down to her pretty foot, and he, in conscious triumph, looked warily around to note if they were observed.

They were observed. Sir John Weeldon had noted them, but with a careless eye, for he was engaged in conversation with a very great political personage, who had met him in the House. And Lord Oletree noticed them, and said to his friend General Calthorpe:

"By Jove, general! if I were young Greville I would rather not see such familiarity between my wife and that handsome young Frenchman. Did you notice how deeply engrossed they were, how low they spoke, and what eyes they made at each other?"

"Most Frenchmen have loose notions of honour where pretty women are concerned!" sentimentally observes the soldier, to which his lordship adds with earnestness:

"And they have no more care for the victims they make than a good shot at a pigeon match has for the poor bleeding birds that flutter down through the summer air into the dirt!"

"And die there in lingering agony," says the famous warrior, pitifully.

So they pass on into the auditor, where, in the midst of a laughing group of young men, Captain Greville, all unconscious of his frivolous young wife's danger, is telling "a good story."

It refers to a stately and beautiful woman of high rank who has just swept by and some men in Society well known to them all, and is so "good" a story that each listener is particularly careful that its hearing should be confined to themselves. If they were women we should say they were slanderous; being men, we say they are listening to "a good thing."

Whenever a lady approaches this group, Mantagu is nudged significantly, and his story ceases until she has passed, when the listeners bring their heads closer together again, and laugh consumedly.

The captain ends his merry story, saying: "But you'll hear of it again. The whole affair will come out in the Divorce Court!"

Alas! Is it so light a thing, so "good" a jest in refined and select society—this shipwreck of a woman's honour and the happiness of a good man's life?

While refreshing themselves with ices, Lady Mary Greville is telling the Duchess of Harborton the story of Mrs. Weeldon's disappearance.

"It's a most mysterious affair," she says, in conclusion; "and all poor Sir John's efforts to discover the wretched mad creature have utterly failed! Where she is, or what has become of her. Heaven only knows!"

"How long has she been gone?"

"Twelve months!"

"How long was she in the mad-house?"

"Ten months!"

"It's a strange affair."

Then her Grace changes the subject.

"I wish Florence would show that reprobate, Monsieur Delvaux. We saw him often last season in Paris, and learnt all about him. He is a dangerous man; he meets her too frequently, and is, I am told, by far too attentive to her. Keep Florence from him, if you value your poor child's prospects and happiness."

Lady Mary replies calmly, with a smile of maternal confidence and pride:

"I do not think there is anything to apprehend. Florence knows how completely all her future prospects depend upon herself. Monsieur Delvaux has a beautiful voice and refined, musical talent; a handsome person, he is a favourite with women, and all the men are jealous of him. Florence is not a child; she knows him very well, and she knows how to use him to her own advantage."

Her Grace still remonstrates:

"He is a heartless hypocrite, and has a knack of winning what I am sure he never deserves—a woman's confidence. Such a tool

may be of occasional use, but it is double-edged, and much too dangerous for playing with!"

The duchess is a lady of grave manners and most imposing solemnity—a lady of much state and dignity—a ceremonious and polite old lady; but she has not the haughty coldness and surface-hardness of her relative, Lady Mary. She has not that perfect control over her emotions, thoughts and speech which Lady Mary has. Under her robes of heavy state and grandeur her bosom heaves, and her heart is seen to beat. But Lady Mary's pride wears armour of steel, which betrays nothing that moves beneath it.

But even as the duchess spoke of Monsieur Delvaux, the fashionable mother experienced a tremor of painful fear.

She really had noticed something between the Frenchman and her daughter—something which awakened an uncertain doubt—and the confidence she so smilingly expressed in the prudence and mental strength of Florence was rather what she thought she ought to feel than what she actually felt. She had persuaded herself that it was only a mother's too easily excited fear which had led her to imagine something which no one else perceived. But now—well, now, she was suddenly very uncomfortable, and rose abruptly to seek Florence.

"The poor child must require refreshment," said she.

In the corridor she met her son.

"Where is your sister?"

"In the next room."

"Whose wish?"

"Together with Grace, but they separated."

"Monsieur Delvaux—is he here? Is he with Florence?"

"Monsieur Delvaux is here. He has been making love to Grace on the grand staircase, confound his impudence! I came upon them suddenly—in fact, I overheard him!"

The captain speaks in jest and with a laugh, but it seems forced.

Under his affectation of merriment the quick eye of the mother detects something very like suppressed bitterness and anger.

"Did you leave Grace with him?"

"Yes; but her sister, Lady Holt, is with her. She doesn't like the Frenchman."

"Nor do I. I am going back for refreshment. Send Florence to me as soon as you can."

When the guests were departing, and Lady Greville's brougham separated from the great throng of horses and carriages, loungers and liveried servants, in far-famed Downing Street, Lady Mary said, languidly, to her daughter:

"Florence, I wish you for the future to avoid Monsieur Delvaux. His reputation is not of the best, and he has an ugly knack of distorting ladies' favours, however trivial, very unpleasantly."

Florence says, listlessly:

"Who said so? Some man, of course! They are all so awfully jealous of him!"

"You must discourage him," replies Lady Mary, sharply.

Florence eyes her mother inquiringly before she says:

"You have some motive for this, mamma. Has he infringed the laws of good breeding in any way? I have never found him wanting in delicacy myself. What has he done? Most girls think him awfully agreeable."

"I have a very good reason for making the request, my dear; let that suffice," says her ladyship, stiffly.

"I declare, mamma, you are a feminine Nero. I'm quite sure there's no harm in the man—at least, so far as I am concerned."

"That is enough, my dear; you will not oppose my wishes, I'm sure."

"It's very provoking," says Florence, resentfully; and during the remainder of the homeward drive, although she sighs occasionally, and yawns now and then, and sometimes indulges in a gesture expressive of restless impatience of her mother's control, she is silent.

Lady Mary's anxiety would not be diminished if she knew how the handsome young Frenchman's face and voice haunt her daughter's thoughts and move her secret feelings.

CHAPTER VI.

OWEN'S FARM.

The hearth was clean, the fire was clear,
The kettle on for tea;
Palemon in his elbow chair,
As blest as man could be.

UNDER the little porch of his cottage, in his easy-chair, with a clay pipe, and a mug of that cider which Cornish people seem to consider perfect in proportion with its sourness, sits, one Saturday evening, Owen Jenkins.

The soft, misty glow of the western light falls upon his honest, healthily-brown face, and burns in his merry dark eyes. It lights up, as if for a general illumination, every clear, clean pane of glass in the little square windows, falls in golden zigzags upon the old thatched roof, with its lichens and weather stains, and upon the steeply rising hill above and beyond it, where it gives to the orange-yellow of the ripening corn a deeper hue.

The air is warm and soft; bees hum and wafts buzz in it, and myriads of insects fill it with the whispering sounds of their low whizzing and whirring, while in the clear, cool blue above a skylark pours out its musical soul in a vesper song of exulting gratitude and happiness.

But it is the laughter of his two little ones at play amongst the garden flowers that makes sweetest music to the father's ears, and fills with the full, deep peace of a wise content the Cornish farmer's simple heart.

Mary is in the kitchen beyond the open door where sits her lord. She plies her busy needle, and has the last new baby in her lap, and listens in pleasantly meditative mood to that quiet, purring song which the kettle upon the fire is singing cheerily over a grate made with two blocks of pipe-clayed stone connected by iron bars.

Owen's Farm, as you know, is a little oasis of culture within a sudden hollow amidst a wilderness of rock and sand shut in by low, treeless hills and furze-covered moors, with the sea in the distance, a straight, long quivering line of golden fire.

Ploughing up the sand of the gully-like road descending to the farm comes a fisherman and his wife—a strong, hale old man smoking a pipe, and a woman as hearty and as hale, with a basket on one arm and an ancient umbrella of the faded lettuce shape and colour tucked under the other. Cornish folks always expect rain. They have a saying there "that Cornwall has a shower for every day and two for Sunday."

Old John William Jenkins, whose years have numbered, as he tells with a congratulatory chuckle, "four-score and five," and who adds, with a sly touch at cause and effect, perhaps, that "for more nor forty year never a touch o' doctor's stuff ha' passed his lips," has got his "shore-going" clothes on, clothes reserved for Sundays and holidays; and he trudges along cheerily down the steep descent into the little valley that is almost a glen, with a step that is heavy, but still firm, sure, and vigorous.

His wife, Elizabeth Ann, voluble of tongue and loud of voice, a famous mender of nets and ourer of fish, and a notable housewife, is a comely old woman still, her husband's junior by some thirteen years, tall and strong, looking the very spirit of sturdy rustic independence.

No one who was familiar with the face of Sir John Weeldon could look into that of this old fish-wife without saying:

"He looks like her son."

Her face is older, of course, and thinner, but the deep glow of the summer sunset falls upon the same swarthy complexion, the same square, massive forehead, heavy lower jaw, and dark, deep-set eyes, and when she frowns or smiles the resemblance is increased.

Suddenly talking as they plod along, the old Cornish couple turn into the narrower field-path which leads them to Owen's Farm.

What a sudden excitement of delight broke upon the slumberous evening's quiet when old John William and Elizabeth Ann Jenkins peered smilingly over the low stone wall of



[SHE CUT OFF HANDFUL AFTER HANDFUL OF HER BEAUTIFUL HAIR.]

Owen's Farm, and the young farmer, detecting them, sprang to his feet with a roar of heartiest welcoming, bringing the children eagerly to the spot with a clamorous outcry of "Grandfather! grandmother!" and Mary, all smiles and joyousness, with her work in her hands and her baby in her arms.

"Come in—come along—in you comes!" exclaims Owen, affectionately. "It does a man's heart good to see you like this, my dearies."

"Bless you, dears!" cries the stalwart grandmother, alternately kissing and-embracing son, daughter and grandchildren, bestowing kisses that resound like a salute of exploding guns, and hugs that almost crack their bones.

And "How are 'er, missus?" and "How are 'er, ole John?" and "How are 'er, Mary?" they shout, as if every one were nearly stone deaf, their hearty noises of eager welcoming travelling out and away up the hill-side and over the moors and rocks, echoing all around.

Owen takes his father's hard, dark-brown, wrinkled hands within his own iron-like palms, and shakes them as if he would jerk the old man's arms from his body while he asks how he is, and the ancient fisherman, returning his son's powerful grip with another almost as strong, replies:

"We're well enow, Owen; 'tain't much as ever ails us, 'cept now an' agen a touch o' rheumatiz, does it, missus?"

"'Er ain't amiss for eighty-five, doan't 'er see?" asks Elizabeth Ann, eyeing John William admiringly, and appealing to her daughter-in-law; while the old man, as proud of his wife's admiration, his great age, health, strength, and preservation, as if they were personal virtues and noble achievements, as, indeed, they often are, chuckles and crows, and, thinking probably of their sober, active, steady, out-door lives by the sea, says:

"'Tain't fitty as we should be poorly, is it?"

To which Owen, scornfully incredulous of anything contrary thereto, replies:

"'Tain't fitty—'deed, no!"

The rest of the evening was devoted to merry-

making, in which noise was by no means spared, and in the midst of it the postman arrived.

This was another great event, full of fresh excitement.

The postman was a little old man wearing a leather bag suspended over his shoulder. He opened the door without ceremony, and at once took his seat amongst them, and leisurely selecting from his bag a couple of letters, carefully inspected and frankly commented upon them before he handed them to Owen, whom he called his "son."

One was from Mary's home in London. The postman's opinion of Jemmy Benny's handwriting was not complimentary.

The other was from Ernest Benny, and the postman, in a kindly spirit, solemnly offered to "sweer" that it was written "by a man as ez been properly edercated."

After a draught of cider had been given to him, the letter-carrier departed cheerily, eating, as he went, bread and cheese duly cut for him by Mary.

Mr. James Benny's letter told the story of Mr. James Grant's visit, and his offer to assist in the emigration to Australia of any member of the Benny family willing to go.

Owen shook his head.

"I'm Cornish," he said, "an' Cornish I'll be to the end o' the chapeter. No furrin paerts for Owen Jenkins!"

And Mary, who had never seen any land but her own, said, with fervour:

"There is not in all the world a better land than England."

And Mr. John W. Jenkins, striking the table with his fist, emphatically approved their decision, crying:

"Right y'are, my cheldurn!"

And Mrs. Elizabeth Ann Jenkins said, with emotion:

"We's Cornish, Owen—blood, body, and bones, we Jenkinses; we'll stick to Cornish an' stan' up for Cornish to the last."

"One an' all, my cheldrun, one an' all!" exclaimed the grandfather, patriotically.

The second letter told them that Ernest Benny and his wife Clara, and Ellen and her husband Charley, were all coming to see them the following month.

"Ernest—ah! that's him as makes picters," says Owen; "and Charley, he portegruffs, I know. Well, we'll give 'em a hearty Cornish welcoming, my dearie, come whenever they comes."

"What a journey!" exclaims old Mrs. Jenkins. "All the way from London town. All the way from London Church town. That's where my boy went to, my good little Jacky! Aw loar!"

She sighs as she speaks, and grows melancholy.

Smitten with a sudden idea, she turns quickly to Mary, saying:

"I remembered me now of the man's name—the name of him ez lured my boy to run away. Maybe you knew him when you were in London town, Mary, and maybe he can tell us about Jack! I'll sweer as Jack be alive—a voice telled me in my mother's heart he were alive, this very mornin'."

"What was his name, mother?"

"Weeldon."

"I never knew but one of that name, mother, and he is not old enough to be the man you mean."

The evening passes pleasantly and cheerfully, and night shuts them in peacefully.

(To be continued.)

SENATOR EDMUNDS, of Vermont, being asked to write on the subject "How to Succeed in Public Life," returns the following as a part of his answer, and it is worthy to be printed in letters of gold: "A young man's object should be, I think, to pursue a private calling, and with that to cultivate the largest possible acquaintance with public affairs and the principles on which they should be conducted; to always participate in elections, and to leave public honours and responsibilities to seek him, and not he them."

THE ANGEL ON EARTH.

By L. E. L.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

I NEVER saw a girl for whom the epithet "lovely" seemed so completely suited as Mildred Pemberton: she was made up of all bright colours. Her lip was of the most vivid scarlet, her cheek of the warmest rose, her eyes of that violet-blue so rarely seen except in a child, and her skin of a dazzling white—so transparent that the azure veins in her temples seemed almost as blue as her eyes. Her hair curled naturally, and no poetical simile ever went beyond the truth of its brightness. Gold, sunshine, etc., were the only comparisons for her glossy ringlets.

When she was two-and-twenty she scarcely looked sixteen, and her manners were as childish as her face and figure. She was guileless, enthusiastic, and sensitive; too ignorant in every way, both of books and things, perhaps, to be called clever, but she had in herself all the materials for becoming so—with that quick perception which the imagination always gives, and the energy which is the groundwork of all excellence.

Sir Henry Pemberton, her father, was a severe man, and it was said that a young and beautiful wife had withered in the ungenial atmosphere of his cold, stern temper. Only that Englishmen have a travelling mania, and the more comfortable they are at home the less they can abide to stay there, no one could have accounted for Sir Henry's coming to Rome. He cared nothing for the fine arts. I doubt whether the finest music would have wrung from him more than Dr. Johnson's ejaculation, when the difficulty of some celebrated overture was dwelt upon: "Difficult! I wish it were impossible!" I never heard him make but one remark on painting, namely: "Wonder that people should go to so much trouble and expense to have that on canvas which they see better in the streets any day." For antiquities he had no taste, and society he positively disliked.

His daughter, however, had his share of enjoyment and her own, too; she was delighted with everything. The poetry of her nature was called forth by the poetical atmosphere of Rome. She had that peculiar organization on which music has influence like "the enchanter's wand;" while Corinne and Chateaubriand had already excited all her sympathies for "the world of ashes at her feet." But, after seeing her at the Spanish ambassador's ball dancing with the young Count d'Arrezi, I was persuaded that the fair English girl was investing all things around her with that poetry which the heart flings over the commonplaces of life once and once only.

A night or two afterwards (for we both lived in the Piazza di Spagna) I heard the chords of a guitar accompanying a song from extempore stanzas in honour of a certain wreath of flowers, which I took for granted were thrown into the street. Now, a guitar, a cloak, moonlight, and a handsome cavalier—what nature (at least, what feminine nature) could resist them?

Accustomed to the seclusion of a country seat or the small coterie of a country town, where her taste, feeling, and fancy alike were dormant, the effect of Rome on Mildred Pemberton was like a sudden introduction into fairyland. Her eyes and senses were alike fascinated—she lived in a dream of realized poetry. Love and youth are ever companions, and Mildred was no exception to the general rule. But hers was one of those natures which love affects the most intensely; it was, indeed,

The worship the heart lifts on high,
And the heaven rejects not.

For such love is the emanation of all that is most elevated and most unselfish in our nature.

On this subject any general rule is impossible; love, like the chameleon, is coloured by the air in which it lives, and the finer the air



["ALL I SHALL EVER LEAVE HER WILL BE MY CURSE!"]

the richer the colour. Some young ladies have a happy facility of falling in and out of love; their hearts, like raspberry tarts, are covered with crosses.

But Mildred was too sensitive and too ideal for these "light summer fancies." Her affection was her destiny, and she loved the young Italian with the devotion and depth of a love that was half poetry.

I never saw a handsomer couple, such perfect representatives of the north and south—she fair as that sweetest of roses, the one called the "Maiden's Blush;" and he of that rich dark olive which suits so well with the high Roman features.

There are always plenty of people to talk of what does not concern them, and a love affair would seem to be everybody's business, precisely because it is the one of all others with which they have the least to do.

At last the affair reached Sir Henry's ears,

and he was as furious as any father in a romance of three volumes. Bread and water, and to be locked up, were among the least of his menaces; I believe he thought himself merciful because they were the only ones that he actually inflicted.

He was wrong, as all are who rouse the passive resistance of a woman's nature. The indignity and violence with which she was treated only made her turn more fondly to the shelter of the loving heart she believed was so truly her own. Kindness might have brought her to her father's feet, ready to give up her dearest hopes for his sake; but his harsh anger only made her tremble at the hopeless future.

There was also another motive which strengthened her resolution. She had become secretly attached to the Catholic faith, and, like all young converts, was enthusiastic in her belief. Love might have something to do with the con-

version. Sir Henry said it had done all the mischief; but Mildred, at all events, believed that, even had the Count d'Arresi been out of the question, her vocation would have been the same; still, she felt happy in the idea of their mutual conviction.

Well, one moonlight night a closely-shrouded couple were seen gliding across the Piazza di Spagna. The fountain's low and melancholy singing was the only sound, and the moon shone full on the magnificent flight of steps which led to the Convent della Trinità de Monti. The stately domes shone like silver in the lovely night, and Mildred ascended the vast steps with the buoyant feet of hope as she gazed upon them. They pointed out her place of refuge, and she was conducted thither by d'Arresi.

Gradually, as she ascended, the singing of the fountain died away in the distance, but a still sweeter song arose on the air. The nuns were at vespers, and the solemn chant pierced even the huge walls by which they were surrounded. Mildred clung to her lover's arm as they paused before the gate; she started at the deep sound of the bell which announced their arrival—it struck like a knell on her heart. Her appearance was expected, and she was at once conducted to the abbess—a tall, stately woman; but one whose sad brow and cheek, worn before its time, told that suffering and sorrow had preceded the quiet of the cloisters.

It was with strange feelings that Mildred laid down on the little pallet appointed for her. The room was small and lofty, apparently partitioned off from one of larger size, for the height was quite disproportionate, and the walls covered with huge frescoes, containing passages from the Holy Scriptures; these were abruptly terminated by a dark carved wainscoting that stretched on one side.

The apartment was singularly gloomy, and the subject of the fresco served anything but to relieve it—it represented the murder of the Innocents. Not a horror was spared. Here a pale, wild-looking woman struggled, but vainly, with the ruffian who could only reach her through himself. Another was lying, but the infant in her arms were the livid hues of death. To the left, a female, whose high and Jewish but handsome features were well suited to the expression of a Judith or a Jael, stood with her arms raised and her mouth convulsed with the blending of agony and prophecy—apparently in the act of cursing. But the most imposing figure of all was a woman kneeling by the bodies of two children, twisted in each other's arms, and pierced by the same blow.

The thoughts of how strong a parent's affection must be arose in her mind, and at that moment she reproached herself for leaving her father. Then the terror of his anger, mingled with tenderness for her lover, combated her regret.

"Oh! that my mother," exclaimed she, throwing herself on the rude pallet below, "had lived to counsel and love me!"

And the image of that pale lady, seated lonely in her dressing-room, to which she was confined for months before she died, hardened Mildred's heart against her father. She was a little creature of some six years old when Lady Pemberton died; but her wan and lovely countenance, her sweet, sad voice; the tears that rose so often unbidden to her faint blue eyes, were to her child as taings of yesterday.

At length she slept; but the tears were yet glittering on her long eyelashes when the first rosy gleams of daybreak awakened her. She started with that half-recollection which attends our first confused arousing—she wondered where she was—the events of the preceding night flashed upon her. She trembled as she thought of the irrevocable step she had taken. The cross was hung at the foot of her pallet, and she flung herself on her knees before it, and a more fervent and unselfish prayer never yet arose to that Heaven where alone is pity and pardon. Her devotions over, she approached the window; and the calm and lovely scene gave its own cheerfulness—the crimson blush of the daybreak was melting around the spires that gleamed on high, and long, soft shadows fell from the ilex

and cypress, whose huge size attested the long seclusion of the convent garden.

The distant murmur of the little fountain was only broken by the rustle of the birds amid the leaves, and the early chirp of the cicada in the long grass beneath. Mildred felt soothed and cheered—it is so impossible for youth to resist the influence of morning.

Sir Henry was wild with rage when he heard of his daughter's flight. He challenged the count, who refused to meet the father of his future bride. Next he bent his efforts towards the recovery of his daughter. A direct application was made to the Pope that forcible means might be used for her restoration. This was refused. Miss Pemberton was of age, and the Church would not refuse its protection to one about to become a member of its flock.

On receiving this answer Sir Henry made immediate preparation for leaving Rome; but on the morning of his departure he sent for the Count d'Arresi. The lover obeyed the summons, supposing that it was some overture to a reconciliation. On his arrival he found Sir Henry pale with suppressed rage, and pacing the hall, at whose entrance the travelling carriage was waiting.

"I have many apologies to make," said the baronet, with a manner studiously courteous, "for giving you this trouble. But I wished to send by you a message to Miss Pemberton. You understand English, I believe, or my servant can interpret for me?"

"I understand very well," said the count; "shall be too happy to take your message."

"Well then, sir," continued his companion, "you will inform Miss Pemberton that she is entitled to one hundred a year, left her by her aunt, and that this will be punctually paid into Torloni's. Beyond this she is not to expect a shilling from me. I leave Rome to-day. I will never see her again—never permit her name to be mentioned in my presence. My property will go to my nephew, and all I shall ever leave her will be my curse!"

So saying, Sir Henry passed the Italian with a low bow, and entered his carriage.

"Holy saints!" exclaimed the count in Italian, catching hold of the servant's arm. "He cannot mean what he says?"

"If you knew Sir Henry as well as I do," replied the man, "you would not doubt it," and he hurried after his master.

The count stood as if the carriage had been Medusa's head.

"A hundred a year!" muttered he. "Why, my moustachions are well worth that!"

He returned to his house, smoked two cigars, and then, repairing to the Convent della Trinità, requested to see the abbess.

"Madam," said he, as soon as the stately superior had taken her seat in the large arm-chair, "there are some unpleasant affairs which are best settled through the intervention of a third person. Will you inform Miss Pemberton that I have seen Sir Henry this morning, who has left Rome, and that he desires me to let her know that the hundred a year which she inherits will be punctually paid into Torloni's, but that from himself she never must expect a shilling? He will leave her nothing but his curse. To that," continued the count, with his most melodramatic air, "I will not expose her. I sacrifice myself, and leave Rome to-night. Will you tell her this, and spare both the unutterable agony of farewell?"

"You will excuse my undertaking any such mission," replied the superior, fixing on him her dark and flashing eyes, beneath whose scorn d'Arresi felt himself quail for the moment. "You will say what you think proper to the English signora yourself."

So saying she rang the silver bell on the table beside her, which summons was instantly obeyed by a novice, and Miss Pemberton's presence was requested in the parlour.

The abbess averted her face and took up her beads, and the count was left standing by the window to arrange the coming conversation as best he might. A light step was soon heard; and Mildred Pemberton came in, looking lovelier in the simple conventual garb than ever she had

done with all the aids of dress. The folds only fastened in at the waist suited her childish figure; the pure white of the veil was scarcely to be discerned from the pure white of the skin; the single braid of gold on either side her forehead betrayed how rich the hair was that lay concealed; and the small features gave something of the innocence of infancy to her face. A bright blush crimsoned her face as she entered, too shy to extend the little hand to her lover which trembled at her side.

"My angel!" said the count, dropping on one knee, "I have seen your father this morning." Mildred turned deadly pale. "Do not fear—I will give up everything, even yourself, rather than make you wretched. He has threatened our union with his curse. Thus I prevent its falling on you, Mildred—I renounce all claim upon you—I will leave Rome to-night."

Mildred stood speechless. A woman whose lover resigns her, and as if for her own sake, though without consulting her, is placed in a most awkward situation. What can she do? Take him at his word? That is easy to say, but hard to do when all the hopes and affections are garnered in his love. The superior saw her painful position, and addressed the gentleman:

"You have forgotten to mention, Count d'Arresi, that Miss Pemberton will in future receive only the hundred a year that she inherits from her aunt."

The colour came back to Mildred's cheek and lips. She sought to meet her lover's eye, but it avoided her own. With a woman's quick instinct, where the feelings are concerned, she saw his motives. With a degree of dignity, of which her slight form had scarcely seemed capable, she turned calmly to the abbess and said:

"Have I your permission that the Count d'Arresi will leave us together? It seems to me unnecessary to prolong our last interview."

The count approached, and began some hurried sentences of good wishes, devotion, sacrifice of his own happiness, etc.; but she interrupted him, almost sternly:

"I have but one favour to ask, which is that you will leave me, and at once."

Glad to have been released on such easy terms—for he had expected prayers, tears, and reproaches—d'Arresi instantly obeyed. The door closed after him, and Mildred dropped senseless on the floor. The abbess called for no assistance. She pitied the agony of the moment too much to let it be observed. She raised the youthful sufferer in her arms, and bathed her face with essence, and when Mildred recovered her head rested on the shoulder of the superior, who was watching her with the tenderness of a mother.

"These are the trials, my child, which make us turn to heaven. The holy Madonna keep you!"

This was her only remark, and Mildred went to her cell.

It was fortunate for her that her health gave way beneath so much excitement—the body sometimes saves the mind. Next day she was too ill to move, and it was weeks before the fever left her. Of all things, time can the least be measured by space. Years, or the effects of years, had passed over the head of Mildred before she rose from that couch of sickness. She left there the rose on her cheek, the light of her eye—

Her lip still wore the sweetness of a smile, but not its glory.

The buoyancy of her step, her sweet singing laugh, were gone for ever! She had lived past youth and hope! Someone has truly said:

"The not the lover which is lost,
The love, for which we grieve;
It is the price that they have paid,
The memories which they leave."

This was the case with Mildred. She deeply felt how unworthy Arresi was of her deep, devoted affection. Always accustomed to wealth, she did not understand its value; we must want money to really know its worth, and money seemed to her the vilest consideration that could have influence. She thought with astonishment

on the duplicity of the count. Inconstancy she could have forgiven; that would have come within the limits of her poetical experience. She had been capable of any personal sacrifice to secure his happiness, even with a rival; but to be left so unhesitatingly the moment that she had no longer the prospects of wealth, showed too plainly what his object had been from the first—all his enthusiasm, all his romance, had been more acting. She shrank away from a world in which there was such deceit. To what could she trust, whose confidence had been so betrayed? Mildred Pemberton had lain down on the pallet of her secluded cell—a girl full of confidence, the generous impulses, the warm affections of girlhood; she rose from it a grave and thoughtful woman.

She had been in the convent nearly a twelvemonth, and the time for the final vows was rapidly approaching, when one day, to her astonishment, she heard an English voice in the garden, and saw the fair face of one of her own countrywomen. She soon became acquainted with Emily Pemberton, and found that she was her cousin, though, from a family disagreement, they had never met. Mildred was mistaken in supposing that she was dead to all sense of affection; for her heart warmed at once to her young relative. It was some time before she found courage to speak of the past, and at last she asked about her father.

"He is quite broken by his last illness—pale, emaciated, he is but the shadow of what he was." It is a melancholy sight to see him wander through the dull rooms of the old hall, as if haunted by the memory of those who had once been there.

"Do you think my father would see me?"

"I'm sure he would," exclaimed Emily; "it is only pride that prevents him seeking you. But should not that be your part? You would not have a parent humble himself to his child?"

Before they parted that evening, it was settled that Mildred should accompany her cousin the following week, when she was returning, under the protection of her brother.

The fact was, that the moment Sir Henry arrived in England he had sent for his nephew, executed a will in his favour, and was then seized with a violent illness, which truly had left him an altered man.

The next morning Mildred requested an audience of the abbess, whose kindness to her from the morning Count d'Arresi left the parlour had never known change. She explained to her all her thoughts and feelings—her misery at fancying her father desolate in his old age, and her conviction that she ought to seek his pardon.

"If he reject me, I return to your feet, mother!"

The superior, for an instant, yielded to the weakness of humanity; tears stood in her eyes, and her stately head rested for a moment on Mildred; but the emotion was soon subdued, and the voice was almost as steady as usual, as she said:

"Go, my beloved child. Your duty to your sick and solitary parent is paramount to every other; in fulfilling that you best fulfil your duty to your God. Go; but if the world again repeat its bitter lessons, and you shrink from a burden too heavy to bear, remember, while I live you have a home in the Convent della Trinità."

Mildred bathed the hand pressed to hers with her tears; they were her truest thanks.

A week more saw the cousins on the road to England; when they traversed with all possible rapidity; and, with a throbbing heart, Mildred found herself in the park which she had quitted so many months ago—and yet it seemed like yesterday, for not a sign of change appeared. The sun was sinking over the avenue of old oaks; the lake was reddening with the glow; the long shadows rested on the grass, while in the distance they mingled in undefined obscurity; the deer were gathered together beneath the trees; and a large dog-rose bush was in the full luxuriance of its faint and fragile flower.

Charles Pemberton and his sister went forward to prepare Sir Henry; but, after a few moments, Mildred's anxiety became uncontrol-

lable. Gradually she approached the house; she ascended the terrace, and, once there, thought she might safely enter. There was a little room which opened upon it—it had once been her own favourite chamber, for it contained a picture of her mother, with herself, then a little creature of two years old, in her arms. As she approached she heard voices, but the turn in the wall (for it was a corner room) completely concealed her. She could not be mistaken—it was her father's voice, and she heard him say:

"Charles, I own the weakness; I do pine to see my child!"

The next moment Mildred was at his feet. She found him much changed: illness had subdued his iron strength. He was lonely and dependent, and he now acknowledged the need of that affection which hitherto he had repelled. He soon could scarcely bear his daughter out of his sight, and she watched his every look.

Sir Henry, almost confined to the house, driven about in the pony-chaise, was a happier man than he had ever been. Only one subject of anxiety remained: he had openly made his nephew his heir, and he now saw the prior claim of his own child. They were gathered one summer evening in the little parlour, which still continued their favourite room, when Sir Henry introduced the subject.

"It does not need," exclaimed the cousins, in a breath.

But Charles had yet more to say; he told Mildred that he loved her, and implored her father to give her hand, as of far more value than all the wealth he could bequeath.

Mildred allowed her hand to rest in his; but even the lover could draw no encouragement from the action. She was calm, but very pale, and her kindness was only kindness.

"Charles," said she, looking on him with the gentle affection of a sister, "I have loved once—however unworthily; I can never love again. I returned not to the world, but to my home—I am God's and my father's!"

Charles gazed earnestly on the sweet eyes that sank not beneath his own. He saw that hope was out of the question, and, pressing the hand which he relinquished, would have left the room; but, detaining him, she turned to her father, and said:

"He is my brother, is he not?"

"It shall be as you wish, Mildred," replied Sir Henry; "though I had hoped otherwise."

Charles soon after left for a gay season in London, where he formed an attachment to the beautiful, but portionless, orphan of an officer who had been killed in the Peninsula; it was Mildred who reconciled Sir Henry to the match. The young couple took up their residence at Pemberton House, and Mildred was to them as a sister.

At Sir Henry's death, it was found that he had bequeathed his whole property to his nephew, with only a sufficient annuity to his daughter, and a little cottage which she had had built in the park. This was close to her cousins, without the strict retirement in which she lived being any check to them. She never married, but passed her life in acts of kindness. Her place was by the sick-bed, or with the afflicted—the soother of every sorrow, the friend in every trouble! The children, who were fast growing up in the old hall, adored her; and when, in after days, they passed her portrait in the gallery, it was with the same remark:

"If ever there was an angel on earth, it was my cousin Mildred!"

A THOUSAND people will go to church in the wet to see a beautiful girl married, but if it rains on Sunday they stop at home.

At the station of Dol, in Brittany, is a French "Railway Jack," a dog, which makes it his mission to warn people out of danger. The poor creature was once injured by a passing train, having his nose crushed and a foot cut off. Ever since he watches for each train to be signalled, and on its arrival limps close to the train and barks vigorously until it leaves the station, and then lies down quietly until the next arrives.

A MARVEL.

By JOHN BIRD.

(COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER.)

CHAPTER I.

A LONELY pedestrian, with his portfolio slung at his back by the side of a bag containing a change or two of linen, was traversing a wild and beautiful district of our highly favoured isle.

It possessed an additional charm in the eyes of one who, somewhat fastidious in his tastes, exulted in the absence of those tourists who, with a sketch-book in one hand and a commonplace book in the other, are perpetually on the watch to appropriate the wonders of animate or inanimate nature.

In a word, it was not a show-country, and the comparative loneliness of its silent grandeur, a loneliness unbroken save by the peasantry of the district, or those denizens of the field and forest that harmonize so beautifully with their native scenery, more than atoned to our wanderer for the privations inseparable from a long sojourn where inns—by courtesy so called—are "few and far between."

Nature, however, among other excellencies, numbers that of conferring on her votaries a keen appetite, which, though awhile postponed, becomes but the more urgent at last; and such an appetite did our traveller possess at the close of a fine day, when the gathering shades of evening formed an additional incentive to sharpen his exploratory faculties.

Long did he look, and anxiously, through the clear blue ether for that lovely object to more than one sense, the curling vapour that rises from a wood fire, an object which at this moment would have seemed the loveliest feature of the landscape.

It appeared at last, backed by a mountain half covered with fern, now brightened by autumn into leaves of gold, it rose, as clear and silvery a vapour as ever gladdened the gaze of a foot-sore and hungry pedestrian. A grotesque sign of a sow discoursing music, sweet or otherwise, on the bagpipes, invited him to enter, and a few minutes installed him in a parlour, which, if its dimensions forbade the equivocal pastime of swinging the hostess's cat, was in its neatness and cleanliness more than a match for apartments of greater pretension.

And here our wanderer, albeit he had eschewed a dinner which he had no means of obtaining, ordered that which should be the order of every way-worn pedestrian, dinnerless or not, if he wishes to be truly refreshed after long toil and travel—tea. Whatever adjunct his fancy may suggest, or his quarters afford, tea—is the one useful article that can in no case be dispensed with.

"And be so kind, my good lady, as to make it for me," cried the traveller, unslinging his portfolio with somewhat more care than the bag, which had dropped unheeded to the floor. "I have too great a respect for your fine country not to wish to secure friends where, if fate so willed, I could be well content to wear out my life."

"Why, then it must be so," said the landlady, who had been regarding him attentively through her spectacles, "and you are the very gentleman that has been looked for."

"Looked for!" exclaimed the traveller, hastily gulping down his tea and handing the empty cup to the hostess. "Has the second sign travelled hither from Scotland, that you know beforehand what guests you are to entertain?"

"I know more by hearing than by sight. Heaven help me!" replied the dame, taking off her glasses with a sign, and wiping them carefully, "for my eyes will not carry me far now-days; but yet I can see that your honour is slow of speech, and you may be right enough at first, for the square is an odd man, and there is no telling how you may set your horses!"

"Horses, good woman! Why, I came a-foot."

I have no money to waste on four legs when two will serve!" chinking a purse but slenderly filled as he spoke.

"Yet that may be as full as you could wish," rejoined the persevering landlady, "if you can but please our squire; for money is but dirt to him, as well it may be, seeing that he is going to throw it away, as I may say, on sticks and stones."

"But I," returned the traveller, smiling, "am neither stick nor stone, hostess."

"You are as close as either!" replied the dame, sharply.

"Close, good woman!" repeated the traveller, staring.

"Why, ay," responded the hostess; "and for such a handsome, good-humoured looking gentleman—"

"Too sweet by half, goody," pushing the cup towards her. "There, now, it runs over!"

"And will you deny, then, that you are going up to that great house?"

"What, that fine old mansion among the trees yonder? By Jove! I desire nothing better."

"And that you are not hired, as I may say, to go a stone-picking with the old squire? And a queer fancy it is to come into an old gentleman's head! Why, I heard him call some of them plum-puddings, and in my poor mind it was a sin and a shame even for so good a man to compare the best of food, as they are when made after my own recipe, with what would break a body's teeth at the first bite!"

"Ah! I begin to comprehend—the squire then, as you call him, is a geologist, and I—"

"Ay, sure you are to help him! I know very well what you are come about, though you are so close like."

"Well, well, t'other dish, landlady, and you shall tell me all about it."

"Tell you! ay, you want to know what sort of folk you are going to live with, and right enough—though your coming in this sort of blind way is not just what was expected; and then to bring so little with you, as if you had determined not to like it, yet it may be that your trunks are coming by the fly, or" (in a softer tone) "that you are none so well provided, and if so, why, I can always dab out a shirt for you at an hour's notice, and none the wiser but us two, now we are so well acquainted, as I may say. Squire Chiverton, then, is main rich—ay, and kind, too, in his way, but very odd like! At times he seems as if something lay heavy at his heart, yet what it is that can trouble so good a man no one can guess; but certain it is that he is not like other folk, and that, we all think, puts him on such sort of whims as routing among the old rocks and hills, and taking stones for plum-puddings; but never doing anything that can harm living creature—harm! why he is the making of us all—he and dear Miss Emma."

"Oh, oh!" cried the traveller, smiling, "there is a fair lady in the case, then?"

"Ay, indeed there is," replied the hostess; "and such a lady as neither this county nor the next to it—no, nor all England to boot—can match! She is the fairest, virtuousset—"

"Discreetest, best!" continued her guest, laughing.

"Ay, that she is," rejoined the dame, looking sharply on him; "and yet, were I her father I should think twice before I opened my door to a handsome young fellow, like you, whose looks, for aught I know, may be better than your heart! and yet, why should I say so, Heaven help me! when, if looks may be trusted, you are as good as she? Nay, but that cannot be—yet you seem so well disposed that, right or wrong, I must caution you to take care of your heart!"

"Spare your cares, goody," cried the traveller, laughing yet louder; "I am cold as ice; and, though you have penetrated my secret, be assured that not even this lovely Emma shall penetrate my heart."

"This is a most extraordinary affair," exclaimed the chance-elected geologist, as he discussed the subject with himself the following morning in his little chamber; "yet it has an air

of romance infinitely agreeable to my fancy. It seems certain that the destined assistant of these geological researches has either repented of his engagement, or is at least indifferent to its fulfilment. Meanwhile I, who know as little of the study as the strata which it seeks, may at least puzzle a country squire, while I contemplate man as it would seem in one of his most interesting varieties, and woman in her fairest loveliness. It is but to plead dissatisfaction or want of skill, in a few days, when my frolic is gratified, and leave the field open to the real Simon Pure, of whose arrival, should it take place, I shall doubtless have timely notice from my loquacious hostess, or at least to some one better qualified to discharge the duties of the office than an unscientific itinerant like myself. And yet, is there not something dishonourable in thus stealing into a family under false pretences? I must think further of this."

While he was thinking, however, the landlady was acting, having in good earnest sent word to the Hall that the stone-picker, as she termed him, had arrived; while he, not ill-pleased, perhaps, that the hostess had cut the knot which he was only endeavouring to loose, determined without further hesitation to present himself at Chiverton Hall in the character with which she had so precipitately invested him.

On his way thither these compunctious visitings became yet stronger; but the landlady, in the excess of her officiousness, having followed unasked with his slender stock of valuables, he was ashamed to recede, and to avow the truth was an effort beyond his powers of nerve.

His descent from an ancient and respectable family, though an ill-fated father who atoned his errors by an early and violent death had impoverished his fortunes, rose before him, as if in reproach of his unworthy artifice.

"One lapse," said he, mentally, "leads to a thousand others, yet a feigned name is not worse than a fictitious character, and I know not that I can do better (or worse, perhaps) than borrow the name of one too good-natured to reproach me with the theft, should it ever become known to him. Poor Marvell! I question whether thy hard fortune might not render such a post desirable, nor could I, perhaps, make the amende honourable more worthily than by endeavouring to instal thee in a berth of which I foresee I shall soon be weary. Strip away the romance, and what remains? A whimsical old fellow, and a pretty simpleton of a daughter! I can't think what could induce me to fall in with this ridiculous mistake of a yet more ridiculous woman!"

"Why, la! now," exclaimed the unconscious object of his reprobation, in the midst of his reverie, "if there is not the squire himself and Miss Emma, too, I declare!"

Marvell (so we shall call him for the present) looked up, and beheld, not, as he had prefigured, a crack-brained philosopher, and a ruddy-faced country-girl, but a gentleman declining into the vale of life, in whose clear eye and expressive countenance strong intellect shone conspicuous through a tinge of melancholy, deeply marked in every lineament of his fine face; while his companion, beautiful as she was in her first blush of womanhood, owed more to the interest, the eloquence, of her form, than to mere faultlessness of feature or symmetry of shape.

To look on such beings was to feel the deep humiliation of presenting himself in his assumed character; but it was too late to retract, and Mr. Chiverton, ascribing his evident embarrassment to diffidence, hastened to re-assure him by those delicate, yet pointed, attentions which are so grateful to the sensitive feelings of youth and inexperience.

"Mr. Marvell," he cried, when they were seated in the library, for the lovely vision had vanished as soon as they had reached the house, "make no further excuses, I pray you, for your lack of skill in geological research. I embrace the pursuit rather as a refuge from thought than from any deeper interest, and a sensible and sympathizing, rather than a scientific, companion is what I have long looked for and hope to find in you. There is something in

your countenance, young gentleman, which seems to assure me you have a feeling heart. I am a man of many sorrows—the cause of them"—and his light blue eyes seemed at the moment excited by strong emotion—"the cause of them must ever remain buried here. In solitude my mind preys, as it were, on itself. I cannot task my child, good, and kind, and dutiful as she is, to a constant attendance on my gloomy and distempered fancies. I look to you, therefore, as the frequent partner of my walks, the sharer in my avocations, my follies, mayhap they may be termed. If I am gloomy you must bear with me, and I think, from your eye, you will do so; and yet, now I look again, there is something in that eye which, had I seen it earlier—nay, nay, I distrust you not, but yet it hath awakened a pang that only slumbers—alas, it will never die!"

He struck his hand violently on his forehead as he spoke, and precipitately quitted the apartment.

If the embarrassment of Marvell was great before this interview, it was now much increased. He felt all the shame and humiliation of his deception on a man of so high a character as Mr. Chiverton, while, added to the difficulty of retreating, he felt a growing interest in the fortunes of his patron, which seemed involuntarily to bind him to the part he had assumed. Snail we say, also, that the sight, transient as it was, of Mr. Chiverton's lovely daughter had realized all those poetic dreams of female loveliness which had often floated across his fancy as visions never to be verified in an earthly form! Yet love—on, no! he felt secure that the disparity of their fortunes, no less than his long-boasted insensibility, was a barrier not to be overpassed. He would look on her as on a beautiful statue, that, commanding the most devoted admiration, excluded every warmer sentiment.

CHAPTER II.

DAYS, weeks, passed on, and the least of Marvell's thoughts or wishes was to leave a spot endeared to him yet more and more by each succeeding hour. Mr. Chiverton's knowledge of geology, though not extensive, was sufficient to detect the deficiencies of his self-constituted assistant; but a benevolent smile was the only consequence of the discovery. He found in Marvell those qualities which he had desired rather than hoped to find in a scientific companion—talent without assumption, learning devoid of pedantry, a well-regulated temper, and a heart overflowing with the kindest and best of human sympathies. The old gentleman became attached to him in no common degree; and Marvell, on his part, could not but feel highly grateful to, and deeply interested for, one who seemed to possess every virtue under heaven, save that which virtue fails not to confer—a calm and self-approving conscience. His young friend, indeed, more than suspected that a mind, sensitive even to a morbid excess which verged on aberration of intellect, ascribed to some long-past error a deeper shade of atrophy than it might justly bear. But, to touch on this was to awake a jarring string that vibrated through every nerve, and he was warned, not less by the excitement it produced on his benefactor than its recoiling influence on his own mind, to abstain from the subject altogether.

Meanwhile, Emma Chiverton, the frequent companion of their walks, and the devoted admirer of an art in which she possessed little less skill than Marvell, that of perpetuating by the pencil those beauties of nature by which they were encompassed—Emma, whose harp called forth the accompaniment of Marvell's voice, which not unfrequently blended with her own clear notes—Emma sunk deeply into a heart which, hitherto unsusceptible to mere beauty, yielded to the influence of charms, of virtues, felt rather than studied, and imbibed imperceptibly at moments when danger was forgotten. The discovery had not, perhaps, been made, but for an unexpected invitation to his old quarters at "The Sow and Bagpipes," where he beheld, with not less astonishment than dismay, the

very identical Marvell whom he had personated, in a towering rage at the presumption of his landlady, who had in good set terms disputed his right and title to his own name.

"But here comes Mr. Marvell himself," exclaimed the irate dame, "who will give you your own, with a murrain to you, as becomes him"—lifting up at the moment a huge birch broom, as if to take summary vengeance on the luckless intruder.

"And I desire nothing but my own," retorted the real Simon Pure; "but, eh! what!"

"George!" "Harry!" escaped from the lips of each at the same instant.

"Why, what part of the play are you acting here, Harry?" cried the true Marvell, bursting into a loud fit of laughter. "But no matter, mum's the word; say only that you wish to remain my double, my better self, and I am off like a shot."

"Nay, then, but I'll be shot before the squire shall be so bamboozled," interrupted the incensed landlady; "one or both of you must be at your tricks, that is certain, so I shall e'en up to the Hall, and tell all I know."

"No, no, hostess," returned the false Marvell; "the squire must be mine to set this matter right."

"And a difficult office, too, I should guess," said the real Marvell.

"My dear George," continued his friend, "you shall know anon my motive, or rather no motive, for thus strangely assuming your name and avocation, unconscious, however, that I was trespassing on your manor. Stay but till I can doff my borrowed plumes, and invest you."

"Not I, Harry," exclaimed the other; "since the truth must out, know that I came to resign, not to accept, an office which, desirable enough a month since, were now out of the question for a man of two thousand per annum! Nay, never stare, Harry—my great-grandaunt is dead, and has left me all those golden hoards of which she would not have spared me one piece in her lifetime to save me from starving, and which are now not more mine than yours; if, as I fear from this odd step, your means are scant."

"No, no," replied his companion, wringing his hand; "my object, if I had one, was anything rather than gain; and wealth were now more than ever valueless to one whom fortune delights to persecute. Wait, my friend, but till I have avowed my disgrace, and expiated my almost involuntary offence by tearing from my heart the sweetest, fondest hope—hope, did I say?—no, no, not that—and we will depart together."

The false Marvell returned to the Hall, oppressed by conflicting passions that almost deprived him of utterance when he found himself once more in the presence of his patron. The news of his deception, however, had travelled thither before him, and the frown that hovered over the brow of the benevolent Chiverton deeply attested his sense of the indignity practised on him.

"I ask but one thing, Mr. Marvell, or whatever else you choose to be called," cried he, interrupting the broken vindication of his late adherent—"your motive? Yet why should I ask that which is but too evident?"

"I understand you not, sir," replied his auditor; "the best, the only, motive I can assign is, I fear, but curiosity, or a weak desire not to contradict the self-authorized assumption of my well-intentioned but mistaken landlady."

"This is but trifling with my feelings, sir," replied Chiverton, with a deeper frown. "My daughter, sir—my Emma, can you deny that you love—that you have presumed to lift your thoughts to one—oh, heaven! can I believe that she has forgotten her duty, her principles, so far as to yield her affection? And yet, am I not most to blame, who exposed her to a dangerous influence which my own heart withstood not?"

"It cannot be that Emma—that Miss Chiverton, I mean—loves me!" exclaimed his companion, gasping for breath.

"I said it not," replied Chiverton, in a tone of grave rebuke; "and, even were it thus, my daughter is too high-minded, too observant of her duty, not to subdue so ill-placed, so un-

worthy a passion. Oh, heaven! Marvell!" he continued, bursting into a flood of tears, "how cruelly have you practised on the credulity of one who loved you, valued you, as the prop and stay of his declining age! I would have pledged my soul for your faith. I believed your heart to be the seat of every virtue; how deeply am I disappointed! I know not what led to this strange deception. If poverty, I will relieve it. You shall not have the plea of necessity for continuing in courses so unbecoming your talents and attainments—but, as you value my peace, my favour, never let me see you more!"

"No, sir!" exclaimed his companion, in a firmer tone; "that I have erred it were vain to deny, but the force of circumstances, rather than any preconceived idea of deception, led me into a situation which I cannot sufficiently lament. On my soul, I had no thought, no hope, of gaining the affection of Miss Chiverton, whom I had not even seen when I entered your domain! I knew not that I loved her till this discovery awakened me to the truth; and though I now feel that in quitting her I leave happiness for ever, believe me, my deepest regret will be that I have occasioned even a moment's uneasiness to those whom I would die to serve. I have been the victim of misfortune from my birth, and the measure of my woes is now full!"

"I would fain believe you, Marvell!" cried Mr. Chiverton, in a milder tone. "Marvell! Alas! I know not what else to call you."

"The name was assumed," replied his auditor, strongly affected by his change of manner, "to conceal that of a family unallied till now in the person of their descendant. My birth was dishonourable, though an ill-fated father bequeathed me little save his evil fortunes and his name of Woodford!"

"Woodford!" exclaimed Chiverton, starting from his chair, almost convulsed by emotion. "Not the son of Colonel Woodford, who fell in a duel in Flanders?"

"It was even thus," returned the wondering youth, "that my unhappy father perished. But what means this?—my friend, my benefactor, restrain yourself, or this agitation will be fatal!"

He hastened to sprinkle water on the face of the almost-expiring Chiverton, whose daughter, alarmed by the elevation of her parent's voice, suddenly entered the apartment and hung over him in speechless agony.

He recovered to behold Woodford chafing his temples, while Emma, with a trembling hand, applied restoratives to revive animation. He looked wildly towards her.

"My child!" he cried, "you have been ever dutiful—say, will you yield to the dearest wish of a fond, a doting parent, and give your hand to him who stands beside me?"

"My father!" exclaimed Emma, gazing anxiously on him, as though she feared his senses were wandering.

"Woodford, you have owned that you love her, and I—I think—Emma, will you pleasure me? Woodford, will you take her?"

"Take her!—my friend, my father!" cried Harry, sinking at his feet in a transport of bliss.

He looked on both with an expressive eye, and silently joined their hands—Emma, while she stood in speechless astonishment, scarcely resisting her father's wish.

"It must not be!" he exclaimed, separating their hands as suddenly as he had united them. "It must not be! The truth—the dreadful truth is yet to be divulged! Woodford, speak! Would you wed the daughter of him who murdered your father?"

Woodford started to his feet.

"I see how it is!" cried the old man wildly. "I see your abhorrence in your looks! Oh, Woodford! deeply—deeply have I sinned, and deeply has that sin been avenged by remorse so dire, that for long, long years existence has been a burden. Yet you may pity, though you cannot forgive; and I—I was not wholly guilty, since the challenge was forced on me by those horrid laws of honour to which man yields himself, alas! a willing slave. If there be expiation for such a crime as mine, I would have atoned

the fatal deed by a gift the most precious in my power to bestow! Yet, though you reject the alliance of one stained with your father's blood, do not withhold pardon from him whose repentance is not less than his sin!" and the poor old gentleman sunk down on his knees as he spoke.

"My father!" cried Woodford, eagerly attempting to raise him, "my father—if I may, indeed, call you so—too long have you reproached yourself with an involuntary act. From my angel mother, who, in her deprivation, did justice to that cruel necessity which raised your hand against her husband's life—from her lips I long since learned this mournful tale, and was taught to think kindly and tenderly of one whose name alone was concealed from me."

"And will you, then—will you be my son?"

"Will I, my father?"

"And you, Emma?"

Miss Chiverton, dissolved in tears, answered not, save by a silent motion of her hand, which her parent once more placed in that of Woodford.

"Heaven bless you, my children! My sin is absolved—my last wish on earth is accomplished!"

"Harry, Harry! are you ready?" said the true Marvell, breaking into the room. "I can't stay a moment longer with this foolish old woman, who, though it was all her own mistake, insists on it that you are no better than you should be, and I a little matter worse."

"What! mine hostess of 'The Sow and Bagpipes'!" exclaimed the squire, smiling through his tears. "Yours shall be no mistake for yourself, since it has led to so happy a conclusion. Henceforth, dame, your house is your own. See that a good dinner is provided, at my expense, for all the neighbourhood to-morrow, and bonfires at night to celebrate the marriage of my daughter and heirress."

"What! with that gentleman?" cried the hostess. "Well, I always said this was the true man, and that the rogue!"

"And I always said," rejoined the true Marvell, "that Harry Woodford would one day be requited for all the past, though I looked not for so bright, so lovely a reward, as this lady, even for my inestimable friend! And now, Harry, I suppose I may depart alone?"

"Not so, sir," said Mr. Chiverton, smiling. "The name of Marvell is dear to me, even for the sake of a very dear impostor; and, as he will now probably have other than geological pursuits, I must even press your friendship into the service of an old whimsical fellow, who is more than ever disposed to find

Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

THAT brevity is the soul of wit is thus argued by Butler, the author of Hudibras:

As 'tis a greater mystery in the art
Of painting, to foreshorten any part
Than draw it out; so 'tis in books the chief
Of all perfections to be plain and brief.

ACTORS AND THEIR FOOD.—Kean took beef-tea for breakfast, and preferred rump-steak to any other dinner. Macready used to eat the lean of mutton-chops only when he acted, and afterwards adopted, almost exclusively, vegetable diet. Barham sustained his energies with bottled porter. Mrs. Wood sang upon good draught ditto. Incedon patronized Madeira. Wrench and Harley acted through a long night's performance without any refreshment. Oxberry took large quantities of tea. Henderson took gum arabic and sherry; Kean, Emery, and Reeve, cold brandy and water. Lewis would take oysters and mulled wine in the course of his performances; and Gentleman Smith, coffee. Mrs. Jordan dissolved calf's-foot jelly in warm sherry. Miss Catley used to take linseed tea, and Madeira afterwards. G. F. Cooke sometimes took all sorts of liquors; at others, abstained wholly during the evening. John Kemble took opium as a sedative during one part of his career; and many of our heroines have excited their lachrymal propensities by ether.

HOW LORD GRAFTON WON HIS WIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"*Heartbroken*," "*Poor Nance*," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

DARK AND DREARY.

The night was dark and dreary. A dense fog hung heavy as a pall over the deserted streets, for it was close upon eleven o'clock, and by that hour even in the busy, bustling seaport of H—the turmoil and the din of traffic for a while were hushed, though long before the sun should rise next morning in the pale November sky, the docks would be thronged by a nondescript crowd, hurrying hither, thither, carrying loads, pushing barrows, shouting, bullying, or gesticulating, as the case might be, as each human unit bent its back once more to the burthen—the burthen of Life, which is, alas! so heavy to those who toil for mere daily bread.

Rounding the angle of a broad street, a heavily laden cab comes jolting leisurely; along the gloomy, ill-paved thoroughfare known as "Dock-side" it lumbers slowly, for why should Jehu bestir himself to urge his lean mare forward when his "fare," as well he knows, is "onings goin' aboard!" which, after all, is quite a different matter 't' catchin' of a train, attendin' a weddin' or a burryin', as th' case may be!

The vehicle comes to a full stop at last—there, where the gloom is densest, and the tall masts crowd up towards the lowering sky like the colossal spears of some spectral army, so closely are they packed.

"Can't get no nigher, zur!" at length growls cabbie, in hoarse, sepulchral tones, as with a movement threatening dislocation he twists his head half off his shoulders in a futile effort to peer in at the open window of the cab. "Best git out here, I doubt!"

There was a monosyllabic grunt of acquiescence from within. Cabbie forthwith tumbled off his perch, and his "fare" alighted. A couple of stalwart loiterers from beneath the shadow of the dock-sheds darted forward, wrangling in guttural tones as they made a simultaneous onslaught on to the solitary travel-stained portmanteau which constituted the "piece de resistance" of the somewhat miscellaneous collection of shabby luggage.

"Now, now!" growled the proprietor, in tones of menace, as he fumbled with finger and thumb in his waistcoat pocket. "Look sharp, there, and less noise, or I'll send you both about your business! On board the 'Python'?" Yes. She's lying close up 'longside—to the right there!"

"Here you are, sir, for the 'Python'! To the right, man alive!" shouted the mate of the vessel in question, as he came bustling forward, with a decisive and authoritative air which simplified matters greatly, at once reducing the "loafers" to order and submission, and effectually reassuring the somewhat bewildered "fare."

The process of transferring the luggage to the hold of the vessel was speedily accomplished, the volunteer porters were paid and despatched, cabbie received his exact "dues" (with contemptuous silence far more eloquent than any spoken words), and shambled off, emitting low grunts of dissatisfaction; in the direction where his patient hack stood chewing the bit disconsolately.

"Halloo, there!" suddenly escaped his lips, as he came to a full stop a few paces from his cab. "Blowed if I'd a notion you was there! Yer kept snug enuff, anyhow!"

The small personage thus apostrophized turned a pale face and beseeching eyes towards the speaker, but for a moment she attempted no reply. She stood quite still, clutching tightly the leathern handles of a bursting

travelling bag, which had probably known some service ere the damsel in question first saw the light; then moistening her pale, quivering lips preparatory to the effort of speech, she faltered tremulously:

"I—it is I who am going across! Has papa gone on board? Will he come back here to fetch me? or has he— You see," she broke off abruptly in apologetic tones, "I have never been in the docks before, and—it is so dark to-night I cannot find my way! Which of these vessels is the 'Python'?" and—

But "Now, then, Georgie!" at this juncture came suddenly through the fog. "What on earth are you loitering behind these for? Do you think I mean dawdling about here all night? Have you all your belongings, child? It will be useless remembering to-morrow that you left 'this' or 'that' behind!"

"Yes, papa, I—I have everything, thank you; only—I can scarcely carry this bag!" came the quick response, in tones of relief, as the little figure stumbled forward, guided by those harsh, stentorian tones. "Good-night, cabman; thank you, thank you!" as the man picked up the al-paca umbrella which had slipped from under the girl's arm.

A moment later she was lost in the fog, whilst Bob Nichols clambered on to the box, ejaculating, with sundry significant grunts and snorts:

"My eye! that's as rum a customer as ever I see'd! Th' old boy, I'm meaning of!" he added, as though to the night air, or his nag, some such explanatory clause were due.

But just as he gathered up the reins, and emitted from between his lips a preliminary "Tohats!" the voice of the "old boy" in question arrested further movement on Jehu's part.

"Hi! You there! On second thoughts, you shall drive me back at once to the station. I'll be with you in a moment. Return fare, you know, half price!"

"Humph! that's as may be!" grunted cabbie, in an undertone, even as he touched his hat and let the reins fall loose. "We'll settle that question at 't'other end, my fine gent. Seein' as I've paid a'ready for the one lot, I take it this next is another straightfurd, plain-sailin' job, if ever I see'd one at ten o'clock o' night!"

This ticklish question it is happily beyond the immediate province of the historian to decide. Suffice it to state that some few moments later Bob Nichols was rattling his "fare" at a somewhat unusual pace through the silent streets in a praiseworthy desire "t' land" that "precious lot" as soon as might be at the railway station, with a view to retiring in person from active service for the night.

Meanwhile, what of that inexperienced little traveller left behind, setting forth (for the first time in her brief, blameless space of life), solitary and sad, on a long and perilous journey into an unknown world?

CHAPTER II.

A FLOAT!

"WILL you come a bit nigher the fire, miss?" "No, thank you," was the response, in gentle tones (slightly tremulous, perhaps), as the speaker threw up her thick lace fall and glanced timidly round the spacious cabin.

The stewardess stirred the bright fire to a flame, arranged the chairs on either side, glanced approvingly towards the swinging lamp hanging from the central beam, and then, folding her fat hands in her blue check apron, approached the solitary passenger, seated on the extreme edge of the crimson velvet causeuse.

"It looks comfortable, I hope you think, miss?" she questioned, in kindly tones, gazing with something of compassionate interest in her eyes into the girl's pale, delicate face. "We don't rough it aboard to quite th' extent as land folks think—as, indeed, many a passenger is pleas'd t' observe afore they finds themselves o' th' other side. Your first journey, miss, eh?"

Ah! I thought as much! Yer look nobbut young an' inexperienced, like."

For sole reply the girl smiled faintly, loosening the collar of her jacket as though it impeded respiration. Delicately white and, exquisitely moulded was the slender throat thus revealed, whilst the rounded bosom below, heaving tumultuously, unmistakably betrayed that fierce internal conflict which Georgie Sinclair would have given all she was worth at that moment effectually to have concealed. With ready sympathy, the warm-hearted stewardess offered her assistance.

"Ay, ay, best take your coat off a bit. It's close an' tryin' down here, comin' in out o' the fresh night air. Theer! yer'll be more comfortable so!" as Georgie disengaged her arms from her thick cloth jacket, and smiled gratefully (though her pale lips yet trembled) up into the woman's weather-beaten face. "I lay this is yer first voyage, miss, eh? But yer no afear'd o' the sea? That's right," as the girl shook her head emphatically. "More nor half the danger lays in folks imaginin'. Look at me now! I've been makin' th' passage this twinty year or more, an' never had so much as a hair o' my head a-achin' th' whiles I was aboard!"

Towards the close of this peroration, the stewardess, dispensing with ceremony, sank down on the couch by the girl's side, still gazing into the half-averted face with almost maternal tenderness in her own grey eyes.

"Yer a bit downhearted, miss, eh? Yer've parted wi' yer pa for th' first time, I reckon! Ah! well, cheer up! Yer'll be back again in less than no time, I doubt!"

But seeing that the girl responded only by a faint inclination of the head (which might, indeed, have been interpreted either as a gesture of acquiescence or dissent), the stewardess forthwith resigned her futile, though well-intentioned, efforts at eliciting confidence from the young traveller's pale lips, and proceeded to busy herself with preparations for the girl's comfort over-night—Miss Sinclair having declared, with an irrefragable snudder, after duly inspecting her berth, that nothing would induce her to take refuge in that haven of the disconsolate; she would infinitely prefer to spend the night on the comfortable cabin couch.

"There are no other passengers on board, I think you said; so I shall not be in the way if I remain here?" she questioned, timidly, as she laid aside her small plumed hat and brushed back from her forehead the soft, yellow curls which clustered in hyacinthine rings above the dark, arched brows.

"Thank you!" as the stewardess arranged the cushions in the corner as a pillow for the girl's head. "Oh! I shall be very comfortable here, with my rug as counterpane, if" (she added, anxiously) "you are quite sure none of the sailors are likely to intrude?"

The stewardess laughed cheerily.

"Bless yer! they don't dare to shew their noses i' these parts, lettin' alone as they've other fish to fry! Yer'll see no one, my dear, savin' the capting (as may chance to look in late on) for them ladies in their berths 'ull not stir out, I guess, till we get t' land. We'll have another gent aboard, afore we're off—his traps is yonder, see! He was down a bit afore you, but when he heerd that we'd most like not get up steam much afore five o'clock, I th' mornin', he was off like a shot, declarin' he'd be for spendin' th' night on shore; so like enow he'll not turn up till th' 'Python's' shovin' off, when ten to one he'll remain on deck a-chatterin' wi' th' pilot. Anyhow, no need t' fash yerself along o' him. I'll give a look in afore thin, and bear yer company, if needs be—for three a saaf number, anyhow!"

Thus the matter was finally disposed of, and having tucked the little traveller up in a shadowy corner at the extreme end of the semi-circular couch, where the jutting, partitioned wall of the ladies' cabin served to screen her from the intrusive rays o' lamp-light, the stewardess finally took her leave of the wearied girl, who gladly drew the warm rug up about

her ears, and, closing her eyes, with a sigh of relief, wooed slumber as a companion preferable just then, at any rate, to solitary reflection.

CHAPTER III.

AN AWKWARD SITUATION.

Most of my readers must be personally conversant with the indescribable sensation one experiences awakening from profound slumber amid unfamiliar surroundings; few will, therefore, be surprised to hear that when Georgie Sinclair, after some hours of unbroken sleep, suddenly opened her blue eyes to find her delicate nose and chin in dangerous proximity with the stuffed back of a stuffed velvet couch, her heart leaped one moment, painfully, and then stood absolutely still.

For a whole breathing space she found it impossible to collect her thoughts sufficiently to realize time, circumstance, and place; she lay motionless, in a bewildered defying analysis, cramped and chilled, despite of rugs and cushions, and with a dull, monotonous sound in her ears, like the far-off tramp of a thousand feet. Then she slowly turned her head; her eyes fell at once upon the lingering embers in the stove-grate; upon the lamp, now burning dim and with an uncertain flicker; upon the long cabin-table, strewn with books and maps and writing paraphernalia for the convenience of travellers; upon her own hand-bag and umbrella. And then Georgie Sinclair remembered ALL, with a bitter pang and sense of desolation which written words can ill convey.

Yes, she was alone! alone upon the limitless, pathless Ocean; far from home and kindred and every tender association of her hitherto unchequered life! Alone! and bound for an unknown world, so no reassuring "still, small voice" whispered of hope to her fainting heart, though suddenly it occurred to her she was even then nearing her appointed bourne.

Had the vessel made much way? she wondered. What might the hour be? With this reflection, the monotonous ticking of the time-piece at the further end of the cabin arrested her attention, and, turning back the rug, she started to her feet. Then she remained for one long minute spell-bound, motionless, like a creature turned to stone; her very breathing arrested; her lips parted; one hand outstretched; her dark eyes wide, distended; her whole attitude betraying amazement, not unmixed with fear.

Yet surely not so very alarming an apparition, after all, that when met the girl's gaze and blanched her cheek, still it might well have rivalled the newly fallen snow—for a tall, lissom, broad-shouldered Englishman, lounging at his ease, should surely inspire a confident sense of security in the feminine breast in just proportion to those misgivings with which undoubtedly he is calculated to impress his country's foes.

A pale, clear-cut profile, somewhat sallow beneath the lamp's insidious, searching rays; a closely-cropped, dark, curled head; supported on a sinewy hand, delicate as a woman's, on which a solitary brilliant gleamed and glittered as it caught the light—basilisk-like, for a moment riveting the girl's gaze: such the salient points of which Georgie became vaguely conscious, as her fellow-traveller (in blissful ignorance of such surging) continued with downcast eyes to scan the broad expanse of the "Times" newspaper, spread open beneath his arm.

Then, unconsciously, she stirred; as she stirred, he started; and, starting, turned to encounter the girl's dark eyes fixed upon him with a curious minglement of terror and amaze. For a full moment; thus they gazed at one another in mute astonishment; too profound for words; then the man rose, involuntarily, to his feet, and "The d—!" I regret to say, was the ejaculation which escaped his lips!

"I beg your pardon," he was murmuring, one second later, real conviction in his voice and eyes. "But if you could form the vaguest conception of my amaze, you—you would pardon my un-

parliamentary outburst, I'm sure. I—I fancied myself quite alone, you see, and then to be suddenly confronted by so—ahem!—charming an apparition, was somewhat startling to weak nerves, you'll admit! If I may venture to inquire, where on earth did you spring from? Let me first offer you a chair by the fire, though! You don't seem very comfortable over there!"

"Thank you!" faltered Georgie, though she made no attempt to rise. "I went to sleep on the couch here before the vessel started. The stewardess thought I should not be in the way, and I preferred the cabin to my berth. I'm very sorry—" she went on apologetically, but at this point the argument came abruptly to a full stop—perhaps because it just then dawned upon her that, despite an unaccountable sense of criminality, it was assuredly not to this stranger explanations or excuses were due.

"You would have preferred your berth then, after all," rejoined the tall unknown (evidently mistaking the drift of this vague statement), with a smile which displayed his white teeth to infinite advantage beneath the dark fringe of his moustache. "Well, I think, on the whole, ladies are wiser to turn in; though personally, I must confess I would spend the night in the rigging, orashed to the helm, rather than take refuge upon one of those uneasy shelves by courtesy called 'berths.' By the way, is it fair to conclude that you slept the sleep of the just, in spite of all drawbacks? For I'll take my oath you have not stirred nor drawn a deep breath for the past two hours, during which I cherished the fond delusion of being in solitary possession of this state apartment! I took a general survey on entering, and noticed (as I fancied) a bundle of rugs—voilà!—toss!—on the couch. Had I been aware of your gentle presence, I should have hesitated to intrude upon your slumbers!"

Georgie essayed a smile, any more suitable reply failing at the moment to present itself to her mind. Forthwith, however, she became uncomfortably conscious of the bright colour which had mounted (she scarce knew wherefore) to her soft cheek; her eyelids fluttered, drooped; her white fingers interlaced themselves; she caught her rosy rather lip unwittingly between her pearly teeth—thus, speechless and motionless, affording as perfect and tender a study of maiden embarrassment as the eye of a connoisseur might hope to light upon.

Seen, at any rate, was the reflection which crossed her fellow-traveller's mind, as he gazed with fervent admiration at the blushing girl. Moreover, that the situation was, in truth, peculiar and delicately suggestive, was an awkward fact, which dawned suddenly upon our hero's somewhat obtuse perceptions—for had he not unwittingly intruded his masculine presence upon beauty's delicate slumbers? and had not the sleeping fair awoken to find herself faced (not with a perfect stranger, under the most unusual circumstances, at the dead of night? For though Georgie cherished the delusion that she was many leagues away from British shores, truth to tell, the "Python" had not as yet got up steam, and was not destined to weigh anchor for an hour or more.

Ergo, the voyage was "all before them" (as one of the travellers was not slow to recollect, with a quick throb of satisfaction); of a surety, therefore, it behoved these somewhat incongruous companions to set one another forthwith at perfect ease, by making the very best of the "situation." The exact means employed to obtain so desirable a consummation, time and space alike forbid my attempting to detail; suffice it to state that, scarce a quarter of an hour later, Georgie found herself in possession of a low arm-chair on one side of a blazing fire (for the grate had been plentifully replenished), with her small feet reposing on one of the velvet cushions off the couch, her cheeks aglow, her eyes scintillating softly, as the rosy firelight turned to threads of ruddy gold her blonde and slightly disordered tresses.

And he sat opposite—at a respectful distance, however—gazing now into the embers, now around the cabin, more rarely into his companion's flushed and lovely face, as he chatted

gaily of a thousand trifles, his primary object just then being to divert the girl's mind from embarrassing reflections, and at the same time to conceal the boundless admiration with which she had suddenly inspired him—and admiration which it required the exercise of the most intense self-control effectually to disguise.

For men's eyes have an awkward trick of revealing, all too often, what their disordered lips repress; and, from time immemorial, hath not silence sometimes possessed a subtle eloquence denied to the most loquacious tongues?

But our witty traveller on this occasion proved himself a veritable master of finesse; and so well did his cautious tactics succeed, that ere an hour had passed all lingering traces of embarrassment had vanished from his companion's bearing—she was laughing and chattering with complete unreserve, and an innocent freedom of manner which she would perhaps have hesitated to indulge with the majority of her acquaintance under more conventional circumstances, even after the familiar intercourse of years; but then the stewardess had ultimately paid that promised visit of inspection to the cabin to assure herself that all went well, when she had been further beguiled by the astute young man into taking part in the conversation for some few moments—the entire situation being thus invested with a prosaic and desirably commonplace air, which effectually set Georgie at her ease ere the two travellers found themselves once more tête-à-tête.

The captain, too, put in an appearance later, when the "Python" had gallantly steered her course through the dog-days out into the wide, black stream. Steaming coffee was then served, at the request of Georgie's new friend, and biscuits were produced by the stewardess, this innocent refection not only serving to beguile half an hour's tedium, but exercising likewise an exhilarating effect on the spirits of the ere-while dejected girl.

In due course, however, maiden intuition whispered that Georgie would do well to beat a retreat to the haven of the ladies' cabin, and, although the first pale streak of light had indeed dawned in the cold grey east ere she wished her companion "good night," yet feminine scruples were allayed and soothed, and "the proprieties" duly propitiated, by this sacrifice of personal inclination to the exigencies of conventional obligations.

(To be continued.)

"I see," said Mrs. Brown, "that in this boat-ride the Scudamores took water first. Poor fellows! How thirsty they must have been; but what do they put it in the paper for?" "It doesn't mean that," jerked out Brown. "Doesn't mean that!" said Mrs. Brown. "Then what does it mean?" "Why," said Brown, "it means—why, it means that they were the first to take water, that's all. You women can never understand anything."

A CURE FOR SMOKING.—"A few years ago I was a most inveterate smoker," said Judge Tyner, the First Assistant Postmaster-General. "At that time I thought it nothing to get through ten cigars a day, and often I exceeded that number. The practice played the mischief with my health, but, do what I could, the habit stuck to me, and I decided it was no use trying to be virtuous where tobacco was concerned. Well, I cured myself by a mere accident. One day, while crossing the ocean, I had a severe spell of sea-sickness. I went up on deck in the hope that the fresh air would act as a reviver. Mechanically, as was my habit, I took out a cigar and lit it. Before it was half consumed the sickness came on again. Ugh! it makes me pale to think of it even now. Anyhow, overboard went the cigar; and from that day to this a couple of whiffs are enough to turn me upside down. If you happen to know anybody who wants to let up on the habit, just advise him to take a weed and a dose of sea-sickness together, and I warrant you he will be an anti-tobacco man ever afterward."—American Paper.



[MYSTERIOUS VISITORS.]

THE WITHERED BRANCH.

A ROMANTIC STORY OF THE
WELSH COAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WALLADMOR."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE HOUSE OF DEATH.

DURING the two or three minutes that the cavalry and their prisoner were waiting for an answer to the summons, Bertram, who was relapsing at every instant into a dozy slumber, and then as suddenly starting awake (probably in consequence of the abrupt stillness succeeding to the severe motion of a high-trotting

horse), was suddenly awakened by the noise and stir of admission into the castle, which unfolded a succession of circumstances as grand and impressive as if they had been arranged by some great artist of scenical effect.

From one of the towers which flanked the gates a question was put, and immediately answered by the foremost trooper; question and answer, however, were alike lost to Bertram and dispersed upon the stormy ravings of the wind. Soon after was heard the clank of bars and the creaking of the gates—gates

That were plated with iron within and without
Whence an army in battle array had marched out.

They were like the gates of a cathedral, and they began slowly to swing backward on their hinges. As they opened, the dimensions and outlines of their huge valves were defined by the light within; and, when they were fully open, a beautiful spectacle was exposed of a crowd of

faces with flambeaux intermingled fluctuating on the further side of the court.

The gateway and the main area of the court were now cleared for the entrance of the cavalry, and the great extent of the court was expressed by the remote distance at which the crowd seemed to stand. Then came the entrance of the dragoons, which was a superb expression of animal power.

The ground continued to ascend even through the gateway and into the very court itself, and, to the surprise of Bertram, who had never until this day seen the magnificent cavalry of the English army, the leading trooper reined up tightly and spurred his horse, who started off with the bounding ramp of a leopard through the archway. Bertram's horse was the sixtieth in the file, and, as the course of the road between him and the gates lay in a bold curve, he had the pleasure of watching this movement as it spread like a train of gunpowder, or like a race of sunbeams over a corn-field, through the whole line ahead of him. It neared and neared. In a moment he himself was carried away and absorbed into the vortex. The whole train swept like a hurricane through the gloomy gateway into the spacious court, flashing with unsteady lights, wheeled round with beautiful precision into line, halted, and dressed.

What followed passed as in a dream to Bertram; for he was by this time seriously ill, and would have fallen off horseback, if unsupported. The lights, the tumult, and his previous exhaustion, all contributed to confuse him; and, like one who rises from his bed in the delirium of a fever, he saw nothing but a turbulent vision of torches, men, horses' heads, glittering arms; windows that reverberated the uncertain gleams of the torches; overhead an army of clouds driving before the wind, and here and there a pencil of moonlight that played upon the upper windows of an antique castle with a tremulous and dreamy light.

To his bewildered senses the objects of sight were all blended and the sounds all dead and muffled. He distinguished faintly the voice of an officer giving the word of command. He heard, as if from some great distance, the word: "Dismount!" He felt himself lifted off horseback, and then he lost all consciousness of what passed until he found himself sitting in the arms of a soldier, and an old man in livery administering a cordial.

On looking round, he perceived many others in the same dress, which he recognized as the Walladmor livery; and he now became aware that he was in Walladmor Castle.

"Is the Lord Lieutenant at home, Maxwell?" said the officer, addressing the old man who bore the office of warden in the castle.

"No, Sir Charles; he dines at Vaughan House—about twenty miles off. But he will return by midnight. And he left orders that the prisoner should be confined in the Falcon's Tower."

Bertram here stood up and signified that he was able to walk; upon which Sir Charles Davenant, the officer who had commanded the party of dragoons, directed the two constables to go before the prisoner and two dragoons behind—whilst the old warden showed the way.

Raising his head as they crossed the extensive court, Bertram saw amongst the vast range of windows three or four which were open and crowded by female heads, as he inferred from the number of white caps. Under other circumstances, he would have been apt to smile at such a spectacle as a pleasant expression of female curiosity; but at present, when he was taking his leave of social happiness—for how long a time his ignorance of the English laws would not allow him to guess—the sight was felt rather as a pathetic memento of the household charities under their tenderest aspect, and as suggesting the gentleness of female hands in painful contrast to the stern deportment of the agents of police and martial power by whom he was now surrounded.

"Let all cynical women-haters," thought he, "be reduced for a month or two to my situation—and they will learn the blessed influences on human happiness of what they idly affect to despise."

His own indiscretion, however, as he could not disguise from himself, had reduced him to this situation; and however disturbed at the prospect before him, he submitted with an air of cheerfulness, and followed his guides with as firm a step as his bodily weakness would allow.

Passing from the great court, at one corner, through a long and winding gateway feebly illuminated by two lanterns, they found themselves at the edge of a deep abyss. It was apparently a chasm in the rock that had been turned to account by the original founder of the castle, as a natural and impassable moat; far beyond it rose a lofty wall pierced with loopholes and belted with towers that necessarily overlooked and commanded the whole outer works through which they had passed.

At a signal from the old man a draw-bridge was dropped with a jarring sound over the chasm. Crossing this they entered a small court, surrounded by a large but shapeless pile of buildings, which gave little sign externally of much intercourse with the living world; here and there, however, from its small and lofty windows, sunk in the massive stonework, a dull light was seen to twinkle; and, as far as the lantern would allow him to see, Bertram observed everywhere the marks of hoary antiquity.

At this point the officer quitted them, having first given his orders to the two dragoons in an under voice.

The termination of their course was not yet reached. At the further end of the court, the old warden opened a little gate; through this, and by a narrow arched passage which the dragoons could only pass by stooping, they reached at length a kind of guard-room, which, through two holes pierced in the wall, received some light—at this time but feebly dispensed by the moon. This room, it was clear, lay near to the sea-shore; for the wind without seemed as if it would tear up the very foundations of the walls.

The old man searched anxiously in his bundle of keys, and at length applied an old rusty key to the door-lock. Not without visible signs of anxiety, he then proceeded to unlatch the door. But scarce had he half performed his work, when the storm spared him the other half by driving in the door and stretching him at his length upon the floor.

Below them at an immense depth lay the raging sea—luridly illuminated by the moon which looked out from the storm-rent clouds. The surf sent upwards a deafening roar, although the raving of the wind seemed to struggle for the upper hand.

This aerial gated led to a little cell which was not unjustly named "The House of Death." From the rocky wall upon which the guard-room stood, ran out at right angles into the sea a curtain of granite—so narrow that its utmost breadth hardly amounted to five feet, and resembling an artificial terrace or corridor that had been thrown by the bold architect across the awful abyss to a mighty pile of rock that rose like a column from the very middle of the waves. About a hundred feet from the shore this gallery terminated in a circular tower, which—if the connecting terrace had fallen in—would have looked like the work of a magician. This small corridor appeared the more dreadful, because the raging element below had long since forced a passage beneath it; and the breach being continually widened by the equinoctial storms, it was at length so far undermined that it seemed to hang like an archway in the air, and the narrow causeway might now, with some propriety, be termed a sea-bridge.

Bertram here recognized that part of Walladmor Castle which he had seen from the deck of the "Fleurs-de-lys."

The rude dragoons even looked out with awe upon the dreadful spectacle which lay before and below. One of them stepped with folded arms to the doorway, looked out in silence, and shaking his head, said:

"So that's the cage our bird must be carried to?"

"Ay," said the old man (who had now raised himself from the floor); "desperate offenders are always lodged there."

"By George!" replied the dragoon, "at Vittoria I rode down the whole line of a French battalion that was firing by platoons; there's not a straw to choose between such service as THAT and crossing a bridge in the clouds through a gale of wind like this. A man must have the devil's luck and his own to get safe over."

"What matters?" asked the other dragoon, with a blasphemous oath and a heartless laugh. "This fellow is to be killed at any rate—so he's out of the risk; but I don't see why we should run the hazard of our lives for a fellow like him! I am as bold as another when I see reason; but I'll have some hire, I'll have value down, if I am to stand this risk."

"It's impossible!" cried the first constable; "no man can stand up against the wind on such a gallery. What the deuce! it has no balustrade."

"Shall we pitch the fellow down below?" said the second constable.

"I have nothing to say against it," replied one of the dragoons.

"Nor I," said the other, "but then mind—we must tell no tales."

"Oh! as to that," replied the first constable, "we shall say the wind carried him out of our hands; and I suppose there's no cock will crow against us when the job's done."

"And besides, it is no sin," observed the second; "for hang he must; that's settled; such a villain as him can do no less. So, as matters stand, I don't see but it will be doing him a good turn to toss him into the water."

Unanimous as they were in the plan, they differed about the execution, none choosing to lay hands on the prisoner first.

And very seasonably a zealous friend to Bertram stepped forward in the person of the warden. He protested that, as the prisoner was confided to his care, he must and would inform against them unless they flung him down also.

Under this dilemma, they chose rather to face again the perils of Vittoria. Ropes were procured, passed round the bodies of all the men, and then secured to the door-posts. That done, the constables stepped out first, the old man in the centre, and after them the two dragoons taking the prisoner firmly under their arms.

The blasts of wind were terrifically violent, and Bertram, as he looked down upon the sea which raged on both sides below him, felt himself giddy; but the dragoons dragged him across. The old man had already opened the tower, and Bertram heard chains rattling. They led him down several steps, out the ropes in two which confined him, but in their stead put heavy and rusty fetters about his feet and swollen hands. The five agents of police then remounted the steps; the door was shut; and the sound of bolts, locks, and chains, announced to the prisoner that he was left to his own solitary thoughts.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MYSTERIOUS VISITORS.

APPREHENDED as a great state-criminal, Bertram had been committed to the safe-keeping of Walladmor Castle as the only place in the county strong enough to resist the attempts for his deliverance which were anticipated from the numerous smugglers on the coast.

As regarded his personal comfort, however, and putting out of view the chances of any such violent liberation, this arrangement was one on which a prisoner had reason to congratulate himself. For Sir Morgan Walladmor would not allow that any person within his gates should be inhospitably treated; and, with the exception of his shackles, Bertram now found himself more comfortably lodged in his prison than he had been for some time before. He flung himself into bed, and was soon asleep.

But the fury of the wind about this exposed rock, and the fury of the sea at its base—with his own agitation of mind and body—frequently awoke him. As often he fell asleep again, and continually dreamed of the fields of Germany and the friends whom he had left there. Sometimes he was betrayed into imminent peril—sometimes into battle—sometimes into flight; now he saw hands stretched forth from thick vapours to help him; and again he saw the countenances of familiar friends turned upon him with altered looks and glaring with mysterious revenge.

Then came running from the depth of forests a dear companion of his youth with a coronet of flowers, who smiled as in former times; but suddenly he shook his head and vanished. The forests also vanished, and the flowers perished; and he found himself on board the "Fleurs-de-lys," with Captain le Harnois by his side, fleetly ing over endless seas—and seeking in vain for an anchor. He was on board the ship, and yet was not, but saw it from a distance; and in his perplexity the "Fleurs-de-lys" changed into a judgment seat, and an orator was before it—pleading in some unknown tongue against himself.

In the midst of these troublous visions he suddenly awoke.

And then a voice reached him that was no voice of judgment or dismay. The tones were low and sweet; and they spoke as woman speaks when she comes to comfort.

"Edward, dear Edward!" he heard distinctly uttered a few yards from his bedside.

The storm was laid, the wind was hushed, the sea had ceased to rave; it was two o'clock in the morning, and every motion was audible.

Bertram felt his German superstitions stealing over him—but again he heard the voice—and, opening his eyes, saw a dull light in the room, and the figure of a young woman.

She was muffled up in the rich furs of the sea-otter, and the small lamp which she held in her hand streamed upwards a feeble gleam upon her countenance, sufficient, however, to discover the superb beauty and touching expression which had drawn all eyes upon St. David's day.

It was, indeed, Miss Walladmor; and at her elbow, but retiring half a step behind her, stood a young person who was apparently her maid.

"Dear Edward!" she began again, "listen to me. I dare not stay now. If I were seen all would be discovered; but I will write an answer to your letter addressed to Paris. Meantime, I will find some friend that shall put the means of escape in your way; I hope to-morrow in the dusk of the evening. On! Edward, do not—do not let it pass by; for every body here is your enemy;" and saying this she burst into tears. "Go on board a ship immediately. And here is money, Edward; and here is my watch, that you may know how the hours go. It is now two o'clock. Promise me that you will escape. Better times may come. Promise me, dear Edward!"

Before Bertram could reply, however, a hasty clank was heard at one of the bars.

This, it appeared, was a signal understood by Miss Walladmor; she started and trembled, and exclaimed:

"Farewell, Edward! Remember—"

Something she would have added; but the door opened a little, and a voice impatiently called:

"Miss Walladmor! Miss Walladmor!" and in the next moment she and her attendant had glided inaudibly from the room, and the door was again barred outside with as little noise as possible.

As it opened, however, Bertram caught a glimpse of the person stationed outside, who appeared to be a young boy of seventeen; he was wrapped up in a cloak, but underneath it Bertram perceived the dragoon uniform.

That Miss Walladmor's visit had been intended for Edward Nicholas he was sufficiently aware; and, feeling at once that he could have no right to use to the prejudice of either a knowledge which he had gained in this way, he

took care as soon as the light came to secrete from the sight of his jailors the watch and other articles left on the table, which appeared to be chiefly letters of credit on Paris to a large amount obtained from the Dolgelly Bank.

(To be continued.)

THE READER'S BOOK-MARKER.

THE GREAT PLAGUE.

WE this week extract from the new novel, "A Royal Amour," by Richard Davey, just published by Messrs. Remington; a forcibly written, picturesque account of the Great Plague which ravaged London in the year of grace 1665, when Charles II. sat upon the English throne:

"In July the Court and leading aristocracy left the city, and retired to Hampton Court. With them went the Duke and Duchess of Richmond. The Duchess, since her wedding, had frequently received her old friend Mabel, and now earnestly besought her to come with her from the pest-stricken town. At first she resisted, but at length Mr. Norton ordered her to go, and she obeyed. He no longer feared the king's attentions to her, and thought he had entirely overcome all his jealous impulses.

"In the meantime, the plague assumed gigantic proportions. The bulletins returned a hundred and more deaths per day.

"By August the city already presented a deserted appearance. The Inns of Court were closed. The theatres were shut. Most of the shops had their shutters up. People walked in the middle of the streets, so as to avoid touching infected houses. They also went about with strong-smelling flowers in their hands, and used much scent. Whole rows of houses were unpeopled. Presently the death rate increased from a hundred to two, three, and four hundred a day. At length it passed the thousand. London was in tears. Mourners were now so general, that none dreamt of putting on black for their deceased friends, or observing the usual doleful ceremonies. The metropolis was as an Akeldama doomed to destruction.

"At first sanitary orders and regulations were issued and attended to, but by-and-by they were utterly neglected, and the wildest confusion prevailed. In the middle of the month the fury of the scourge knew no bounds. The cruel monster revelled in its savage impetuosity. In some streets it slew every inhabitant. The meat in the markets was infected. Timid folks actually starved themselves to death for fear of 'swallowing the plague.' Men and women were seen to drop dead in the street, and in the public squares putrid bodies lay for days, till the rats eat them up, because none dared bury them. In Smithfield a number of swine fed upon some of them, and being infected, died at their horrid banquet.

"The utmost precaution was needed to prevent famine, for now the country folks refused to bring provisions into the city, and all foreign commerce was stopped. No ships were permitted to leave or enter the Thames. Families were obliged to dole out their store of bread and cheese with economy lest it might not last them out. The poor were in a dismal state, for every kind of work was stopped, and the price of provisions trebled.

"Death was everywhere. Infected houses were marked with a red cross, but this soon became a vain precaution, when every house got to be as bad as its neighbour.

"Death carts, common tumbrils, went around every hour or so for their awful load of corpses, and the drivers, who made an awful profit by the business, were wont to shout as they drove along, 'Bring out your dead. Bring out your dead, and be quick about it.' In many cases, the bodies, at this summons, were pitched out of the windows, stark naked. Poor and rich, men, women, and children, were heaped up on those reeking carts, and driven off to the common pit. There, more often than not, stripped

of every decent rag, they were cast headlong into the unimaginable sink of horrors.

"One night five thousand died. Then a madness, almost as dreadful as the plague itself, seized on hundreds. Fear drove them distracted. They tore off their garments, and rushed about the streets howling that 'the last day had come.' Shrieks and groans rent the air. One woman was seen running down Leadenhall Street with a babe in her arms. On a sudden she perceived it had the pest spot upon its tiny breast. Tearing its gums from her nipple, unmatured by terror, she flung it from her, dashed its brains out on the pavement, and ran along roaring. She fell dead at the bottom of the street, and the death cart coming along just then, carried her to the pit in Aldgate Churchyard. That pit was forty feet long by sixteen wide, and fifty deep. It was full of corpses. There they lay, one on the other; my lord and my lady, the butcher, the baker, and the beggar, head and feet together. There was the figure of a young girl, whose fair Saxon tresses were all now left of her charms. Yon gray beard showed what had been an old man's face, but the silver hairs still sticking to the blackened jaw alone indicated venerable age. There was an infant, still clinging to its mother's breast. But there were at least a thousand bodies in every stage of corruption; lying pell mell in that dread hole. When a fresh corpse was thrown down, a multitude of rats, grown old and fat as aldermen, from the over-abundance of food they got, looked up expectantly. Sometimes an oddly distorted arm, uplifted as if in uncommon agony, indicated that its owner had, perchance, been cast in alive.

"Desolation was everywhere. Fanatics went howling about the streets, 'Death and judgment!'

"Blasphemers, in troops, joined hands and rushed along, singing obscenities and crying out that 'God was a fiend.' Once a party of these wretches was so suddenly stricken by the plague that they fell in the middle of the street as if by lightning, and died in contorted agonies, a horrid heap.

"There was a Quaker man named Solomon Eagle, who was half-crazed and very phrenetical, who, casting off his garments, tore his hair, and went abroad at night with a pan of burning coal on his head, yelling, 'Repent, repent! Turn ye to the Lord!'

"There were thieves who robbed the dead and plundered houses. They held high revels under this reign of the King of Terrors. In the deserted mansions of the rich they found costly wines, and sang, ate, drank, and made merry with harlots; but sometimes the pest joined them, and falling down asleep with drink, they never woke again.

"There was a set of fiends who, being plague-stricken, took it into their crazed heads to give the malady to the hale, and so they rushed about the streets, clutching and hugging such miserable wretches as fell in their way, thus murdering them, for few who touched the infected ever escaped.

"My Lord Viscount Rochester, and a crew of monsters, mostly pimps and courtizans and the like, broke, one night, into St. Paul's Cathedral, and held an orgie there. They dressed themselves in sacerdotal robes, like Popes, Cardinals, and Bishops. Some stripped, and painted black upon their white flesh the outlines of skeletons. Hand in hand they went dancing round and round the majestic columns of the grand old church, the altar of which they lighted up with burning resin. They sang hymns to the devil and burnt stinking taw steeped in mutton fat, by way of incense, and foully desecrated the house of God, until, becoming overpowered with drink, they sank about the steps of the altar in deep slumber. Morning found them there still snoring. At last a damsel of the company, awaking, cried out in agony that she had the plague. The others, hearing her, woke up also, and uncoiled like snakes in the sun. When they recognized the cause of her pain, they rushed in panic from the sacred place as if possessed by demons.

"It must not be imagined that, because selfish-

ness, debauchery, and iniquity took a high hand in the midst of these horrors, that virtue kept entirely in the shade. Far from it. Worthy doctors of much learning went about and did a wondrous amount of labour for sole love and pity of their fellow-beings. The clergy of all denominations, with few exceptions, behaved with nobility.

"Many committees were formed, to which men of all classes associated, and money and goodwill were not wanting. Gentlewomen, with the fortitude of early Christian matrons, did their duty, and more too, by going amongst the stricken, cheering them, praying for them, and, besides decently arranging the dead, giving abundant alms to the quick."

THE FAMILY PHYSICIAN.

SLEEP.—I.

SLEEP is that condition of the body in which the internal and external senses are temporarily suspended, the object and design of which is, not only to renovate, during the silence and darkness of the night, the vital energies that have been exhausted during the day, but also to assist nutrition. During sleep the circulation and respiration are retarded, as well as the different secretions; consequently, digestion is carried on with less rapidity. It is not well explained on what basis some authors have asserted that absorption alone acquires more activity during sleep. Since the functions of nutrition continue during sleep, it is apparent that the brain has ceased to act only with regard to muscular contraction and as an organ of intelligence, and that it continues to influence the muscles of respiration, the heart, the arteries, the secretion, and nutrition.

The ordinary duration of sleep varies in different individuals, either from habit or serenity, from six to ten hours. It is prolonged by fatigue of the muscular system, strong mental exertion, lively and multiplied exertion, habits of indolence, the immoderate use of wine and of too strong food. Infancy and youth, whose life, relatively, is very active, have need of longer repose. Maturity, more economical of time and harassed with cares, devotes to it but a small portion of time. Very aged individuals present two very opposite modifications: either they are almost always slumbering, or their sleep is very light; but the reason of the latter condition is, perhaps, to be traced to the foresight they have of their approaching end.

By uninterrupted and tranquil sleep, properly limited, the corporeal and mental powers are renovated; but if it be accompanied with disagreeable dreams and unpleasant sensations, or even unduly prolonged, so far from recruiting, it exhausts the strength, fatigues the organs, and not unfrequently lays the foundation of disease—as idiocy or mania.

A question that has been often agitated is, whether it be advisable to sleep after dinner? This, however, can only be decided by a variety of circumstances, such as custom, bodily constitution, age, climate, and the like. Digestion is evidently promoted by preserving the body quiet after a meal; this we are taught by animals, particularly those of the ruminating class, which lie down after eating. Exercise ought to be taken before dinner. "Natura," says the learned Haller, "omnia animalia a pastu quiescere docent!" but with many the dinner hour interferes with such a custom. The most easy position for effecting digestion is sitting in an easy chair, and in this posture anyone, without risk or inconvenience, may freely indulge in a short sleep after a hearty meal, should the drowsy god at such a time invite to repose, and rouse up from it with renewed vigour and cheerfulness. The horizontal posture, particularly in full habits, is rather an impediment to digestion, as the descent of the blood is somewhat retarded, and heaviness and protracted sleep is the consequence. When the stomach is weak, other means are used to facilitate digestion,

such as taking bitters, alkalies, water impregnated with carbonic acid gas, and the like, after a meal; the use also of spices, diluting the food, or cutting it into very small pieces. Digestion is also assisted by taking small quantities of food at a time, by which precaution the excitability of the food is never exhausted—a measure more especially necessary in debilitated stomachs. But the most injurious means of all is, stimulating the stomach by distilled, or fermented liquors; for, although such alternative may for the time being answer the purpose, it soon produces very bad effects, and greatly incommodes the stomach. In a weak or slow state of digestion, after having taken hard or solid food, a short sleep may be indulged in, rather than after a meal consisting of such nourishment as by its nature is easily digested. But young people of weak and delicate habits of body ought not to sleep too much, though their weakness induce them to repose; for the more they indulge in sleep the greater will be their subsequent languor and relaxation. Individuals, again, of a strong and healthy habit of body, and who digest their food rapidly, may take gentle exercise after their meals, if they have taken food of an easily digestible nature, requiring but little assistance but that of the stomach and its fluids. And, indeed, such persons, should they have taken aliment difficult of digestion, ought to remain quiet after dinner, and may occasionally allow themselves an hour's sleep, in order to support digestion.

To the aged, emaciated, and those of an irritable habit of body, as well as to those who have spent the preceding night uneasily and sleepless, or have been otherwise fatigued, in order to restore regularity in the insensible perspiration, to rest a little after dinner may be productive of beneficial consequences, and cannot possibly, while nature courts such an abstraction from the cares of the world, be attended with any inconvenient effects, though in such cases the body should be well protected from the influence of cold.

It is said that the Marquis of Lorne, at a railway station in Canada, mentioned the fact that some of his ancestors put their feet under Arthur's Round Table, whereupon a backwoodsman exclaimed: "Wal, if my ainsters had been there, they'd a put their feet a top of it, you bet!"

HOT MILK AS A STIMULANT.—Of hot milk as a stimulant the "Medical Record" says: "Milk heated too much above 100 deg. Fahr. loses for a time a degree of its sweetness and its density. No one who, fatigued by over-exertion of body or mind, has ever experienced the reviving influence of a tumbler of this beverage, heated as hot as it can be sipped, will willingly forego a resort to it because of its being rendered somewhat less acceptable to the palate. The promptness with which its cordial influence is felt is indeed surprising. Some portion of it seems to be digested and appropriated almost immediately; and many who now fancy they need alcoholic stimulants when exhausted by fatigue will find in this simple draught an equivalent that will be abundantly satisfying and far more enduring in its effects."

The father of the Emperor Napoleon thus writes in one of his letters:—"I have been as enthusiastic and joyful as anyone after a victory, but I confess that even the sight of a field of battle has not only struck me with horror, but even turned me sick, and now that I am advanced in life I cannot understand, any more than I could at fifteen years, how beings who call themselves reasonable, and who have so much foresight, can employ this short existence, not in loving and aiding each other, and passing through it as gently as possible, but, on the contrary, in endeavouring to destroy each other, as if time did not do this with sufficient rapidity. What I thought at fifteen years I still think; war, which society draws upon itself, is but an organized barbarism, and an inheritance of the savage state, however disguised or ornamented."

FACETIÆ.

THE MERMAID.

USING of a maiden of ancient renown,
Some time since much talked of in country and town;

She has—to surprise you I think it can't fail—
A great monkey's head and a large fish's tail!

As the tail's the flag end of a fish, said a wag,
The tail of a fish must make her a fish-fag;
All billing and cooing with one I should hate,
Who is fit for no billing except Billingsgate.

To see this strange maiden was every one's wish,
Although she was even a very odd fish!

She's not much like Venus, most people agree,
Though, like Venus of old, she arose from the sea.

To other fair maids this sea-faring divinity,
With plenty of fins, has but little affinity;
For she'd waive a wine vaults to waltz with a wave,
Finding her life where they'd but discover a grave.

Of this very odd maiden they tell these odd tales,
That ere she saw Britain she'd often seen whales;

And though half-seas over she ne'er had a wish,
For drinking too much, yet she drinks like a fish.

And, what you will think a proof of her merits,
This maiden could never endure to touch spirits;
But though it is true that from spirits she'd flee,
She has lain oft with soles in the bed of the sea.

Without a side-saddle she rode a sea-horse,
But she could not, like maids of the east, sit across;
But what seems more strange, and indeed quite romantic,
Though she can't cross a horse she could cross the Atlantic.

She has not one suitor can suit her, 'tis said,
Yet this maid does not murmur, although a Mermaid;

She no doubt weighs their merits, and finds that each fails—
She can weigh them, because she has plenty of scales.

They say she's a heiress, some great Triton's daughter,
Without one foot of land, rich in oceans of water;

And at her two guardians, because she can't rail,
She turns up her nose—ay, and turns up her tail.

One guardian, 'twas said, would away with her run—
At her running some people would say "that's all fun!"

He surely did not mean to make her his bride—
Her flesh of 'his flesh' would be flesh fishified!

To other guardian applied to the Chancery Lord,
And he made this fish girl a Chancery ward;

But when to this state his Lordship had brought her,
She looked very much like a fish out of water.

He surely did not mean to make her his bride—
Her flesh of 'his flesh' would be flesh fishified!

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"The truth always pays in the end," is a time-honoured adage. It is supposed that that is the reason why people are often so chary about resorting to it in the beginning.

When a man told his wife that he had just traded for a new spring waggon, she replied: "You dunce, you! why did you get a spring waggon in the autumn?"

A NEVADA newspaper says: "In the absence of all the editors of this journal, the publisher has succeeded in securing the services of a gentleman to edit this number."

An American editor wrote a personal about a young man going to spark his girl. When it was printed he was horrified to see the letter substituted for the letter r in the word spark.

"Rose, my dear," said a mother to her daughter, "if you are so stiff and reserved you will never get a husband." "Ma," retorted the young lady, "unless the poets tell fibs, a primrose is not without attractions."

"Here's a fly in my soup, waiter!" "Yes, sir, very sorry, sir; but you can throw away the fly and eat the soup, can't you?" "Of course I can; you didn't expect me to throw away the soup and eat the fly, did you?"

"You're not quite so weak to-day as you were yesterday," observed a physician to a patient, while operating, on a recent Sabbath. "No," was the reply, "this is not a weak day—it's Sunday." The physician fainted.

A MAN having declared to a lady that he would shed "the last drop" of his blood in her defence, she said: "I often meet persons who are ready to shed the last drop of their blood; but they take precious good care not to shed the first drop."

A JAILOR had received strict orders not to keep any prisoners in solitary confinement. Once, when he had but two in charge, one escaped, and he was obliged in consequence to kick the other out of doors, to comply with the regulations.

GENERAL LEE is said to have asked a stranger, whom he found eating green persimmons, if he did not know they were unfit for food. "I'm not eating them for food, general," replied the man. "I'm eating them to draw up my stomach to fit my rations."

HE AND SHE.

'Twas plain to see he loved her well,
He loved her more than tongue can tell;

He sought her every hour!
And though she hated him the while,

She lavished every art and wile
To get him in her power.

And he was agile, dark as night,
While she was languid, plump, and white.

As sweet as sweet could be;
Though she despised the little wretch,

Yet, woman-like, she tried to catch
Him, for he was a flea.

TOOK HIS MEASURE.—A very high-toned-looking young man, in exquisite moustache, loud plaid clothes, red necktie, low-crowned hat, straw-coloured kids, and knitting-needle cane, walked into a tobacco-shop, and, throwing down a half-dollar on the counter, said: "Well, this is the worst town I ever saw; a gentleman can't get anything in it satisfactory, and I am utterly unable to see how a person of fastidious taste can live here. I say, Mr. Shopkeeper, can you sell a fellow a decent cigar?" "Yes, sir," said the cigar-man meekly. "Well, then, fly around lively, and do it. Don't you see that half-dollar?" "Yes, sir. What kind of a cigar do you wish, sir?" "What kind?" "Yes, sir." "Why, look at me, sir, a moment, and see for yourself what kind of a cigar would suit me," and he drew himself up grandly and gazed down on the shopkeeper. The shopkeeper looked, and then took in the half-dollar, got out a cigar, handed it to the man with forty-nine cents change, and said: "I owe you half a cent, sir, but I can't make change unless you take another cigar." The nice young man looked at the shopkeeper and then at the cigar, and then at himself, and, without a single word, walked out of the shop.—American Paper.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ROSE and BERTHA.—Use brown Windsor soap, and dry with soft towel.

JUPITER.—We think it is cheaper to buy red ink than to make it, nevertheless, we give you a recipe: Take a quarter of a pound of best Brazil wood, one ounce of cream of tartar, and one ounce of alum; boil these in two pints of clear water till they are reduced to half the quantity; filter, and, while hot, add one ounce of gum arabic and one ounce of fine sugar.

CELIA.—To prevent the lamp smoking, soak the wick in strong vinegar, and allow it to dry before lighting.

VIOLLET.—We are told the following is an excellent lotion for imparting softness to the skin, and as a cure for eruptive diseases: Take two ounces of blanched bitter almonds, one ounce of blanched sweet almonds; pound together till they become a paste, and mix with a quart of distilled water; add twenty grains of corrosive sublimate powder, dissolved in two table-spoonfuls of spirits of wine; shake well.

A COCKNEY.—Hicks' Hall was an old building, of a mean appearance, which stood in St. John Street, Clerkenwell. It was named after Sir Baptist Hicks, who built it in or about 1610, and for the purpose to which it was applied—that of the Sessions House.

CRITICAL.—Stage representations are of necessity untrue to nature, and it is the business of the actor to give an appearance of striking reality to that which is palpably unreal, by the sheer force of his genius. The literary conditions in a poem, or a novel, are altogether different. That you could only reap a very disastrous failure on the stage by the adopting such an idea, is the firmest article in our belief.

E. F. B.—The political and beautiful lady known so familiarly as Molly Aston was of aristocratic birth. She was what was then called a Whig, and now a Radical. It was her that Dr. Johnson wrote the well-known Latin lines which may be thus translated:

"While fair Maria soft persuasion tries
That universal liberty may reign,
Oh! how at variance are her lips and eyes!
For while the charmer talks her captive dies."

Or, according to an older translator:

"In vain, dear girl, thou bid'st me to be free;
I lose my freedom when I look on thee."

J. T. R.—We do not insert such advertisements. The stamps will be returned if a stamped and directed envelope is forwarded.

FREDERICK.—The bride's veil originated in the Anglo-Saxon custom of performing the ceremony under a square piece of cloth, held at the corners by four tall men, to conceal the maiden's blushes. If the bride were a widow, the veil was dispensed with.

BABETTE.—The following recipe is perfectly harmless, and will make your beard grow faster than it naturally would: Cologne, two ounces; liquid hartshorn, one drachm; tincture of cantharides, two drachms; oil of rosemary, twelve drops. Apply to the face daily, and wait patiently for the result.

BELFAST.—"Bona fide," pronounced bonah'fydes, is a term signifying without fraud or subterfuge.

BALL DRESS.—1. The gentleman should take the lady with whom he has last danced in to supper. 2. The M.C. should have obtained your permission before introducing the gentleman to you. 3. "E.S.V.P." in the corner of your invitation card meant, "Responders, s'il vous plait."

BYRONIC.—Lord Byron's wife left him in January, 1816. We quite agree with you, biography is an interesting study.

LIP SALVE.—The following forms a nice cooling wash for the face during the summer months, and removes freckles: Sweet almonds, five ounces; bitter almonds, one ounce; rose water, two pints and a half; white curd soap, half an ounce; spermaceti, half an ounce; white wax, half an ounce; English oil of lavender, twenty drops; otto of roses, twenty drops; rectified spirits, one pint. Blanch the almonds, and beat them up with the soap and a little of the rose water; melt together the oil of almonds, spermaceti, and white wax, and mix with the former into a cream, and strain it through thin mullin; then add gradually the remaining rose water, and, lastly, the spirit with the essential oils mixed therein.

ISABEL.—The best method is with a small pair of tweezers, as you then extract the hair with the roots, and they do not grow again.

DAISY.—1. Alone. 2. The quantity to be used you can only find out by experiment. Our recipe says a small piece. 3. Yes; the tincture will keep, if well corked.

A CONSTANT READER.—There is no set rule. It is a matter of taste.

WHITE HELIOTROPE.—We think you will find the "Speedwell" sewing machine meet all your requirements. A lady of our acquaintance has had one in use for some years, and informs us she has nothing to complain of.

LOTTIE MAC CLER.—1. The lotion is to be well rubbed in with a soft rag. 2. The 12th April, 1886, was on a Friday.

W. RODRIEL.—We are not aware that brass bells are so used. Apply to a bell-smith.

JULIA.—1. Not the Romans. 2. Virgil's "Æneid" was first published at Rome, 1469.

FAIR ROSAMOND.—"Æsthetic" was a term invented by a German philosopher, Baumgarten, whose work, bearing the title "Æsthetics," was published in 1750.

STUDENT.—1. The university at Basle was founded in 1460. 2. "The Book of Common Prayer" was first printed in English on April 1st, 1548, by order of Parliament.

JUDY.—Papyrus.

WIFEY.—1. It is a mistake; both salt and alum permanently injure the enamel of the teeth. The tooth-paste you mention for whitening the teeth—a mixture of honey and charcoal—is good. 2. For toilet-vinegar, take two ounces of dried rose-leaves, one pint of white wine vinegar, quarter of a pint of esprit de rose, triple; macerate for a fortnight in a closed vessel, then filter.

HELOISE.—1. Yes; there is a tax of one guinea for each person. 2. The hair-powder tax began in May, 1793, when powdered hair was the height of the fashion.

HANTE.—The term "Yankee" is from "Yankees," which signifies a corruption of "English." The name was given to the colonists originally by the natives of Massachusetts.

GRACE DARLING.—The cause of the water being hard, and not dissolving soap, arises from an acid. The water should be boiled, and, if allowed to stand, the earthy matter (combined with acid) will be in the sediment at the bottom.

ASPIRANT AFTER KNOWLEDGE.—1. Eugene Aram was executed in 1759. 2. The nymph Galatea was enamoured of Acis, a Sicilian shepherd, who was crushed under a huge rock by the monster Polyphemus, his rival. 3. Dick Turpin was the son of a farmer. Began life as a butcher, and stole the sheep from neighbouring farms by night to sell in his shop by day. 4. First marriages.

YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.—We commend your spirit for economising, but don't allow it to verge on the mean. We will gladly help you to the best of our abilities, and hope to hear from you again, especially when any difficulties present themselves. A stock-pot is the principal "save-all." A furnishing ironmonger will supply you with one, and, when once its possessor, never let it lie idling by. By this means, from mere scraps you can have a constant supply of good, nutritious stock, which will form the base of all soups and gravies.

LAW WRITER.—Your writing will be improved by practice. Get a few good copy-clips, and write from them daily, paying particular attention to the formation of each letter.

BELLA.—"Keep good company, or none."

COOK.—We have heard it said that a needle held between the teeth will prevent the eyes from aching or watering when peeling onions.

LAUDABLE.—Bodily exercise and fresh air are the most important items in the rules of health. You say that you have been detained at home for three weeks, and that your occupation is sedentary; no wonder that you find yourself growing stolid and your complexion becoming "muddy."

JENNY DRAKE.—1. Consult a solicitor. 2. The child is suffering from scrofula.

ACME.—"Biscuit" means "twice baked."

IVANHOE.—1. Miss Burney published her first novel, "Evelina," at the age of seventeen. 2. Mrs. Thrale. 3. Dr. Johnson.

MOTHER.—May and June are the months in which moths lay their eggs. It is well to examine any fur or winter clothing that may be laid by. Placing a shallow vessel filled with turpentine in the wardrobe or clothes closet, will destroy moths and all other insects.

CHILD-WIFE.—Give your husband mutton-broth and light puddings. To make mutton-broth, remove the skin and fat from two pounds of either the loin or neck of mutton, place in clean saucepan, with two quarts of water. After it has boiled, skim it, and let it simmer by the side of the fire for an hour; remove all fat.

READER OF FRENCH HISTORY.—1. Madame de Stael was born at Paris, on April 22nd, 1766. 2. "Corinne." 3. She died in July, 1817.

LILLIPUTIAN.—The green and gold hangings would look very handsome, but ascertain, before purchasing, if the green contains arsenic.

LONDONER.—The Isle of Wight.

MAUD MULLER.—1. From your portrait, we should say the Mrs. Wheeler shape would just suit you. 2. Any expensive washing material would do. Trim with cream lace. 3. The mantle might be trimmed with the jet floral braid now so fashionable, and a quantity of Spanish lace.

BORNEBROUTH.—The lines—

"Spaniel-like, the more she spurns my love
The more it grows, and fawneth on her still,"

are from "Two Gentlemen of Verona," act iv. sc. 2.

DEIST.—If you do not wish the tooth extracted, the following is said to be a good cure for the toothache: Take a piece of sheet zinc about the size of a sixpence, and a piece of silver about the same dimensions, and hold the defective tooth between them.

ERA.—1. Otway, the poet, is said to have been choked by eating a roll too hastily. 2. French prunes are the best for table use. 3. Refer to "The Postal Guide."

SARAH COOKE.—Melons are a species of the cucumber. It is a fruit that is apt to disagree with persons in this country, but is of great value in its native clime, as it affords a cool, refreshing juice, assuages thirst, mitigates feverish diseases, counteracting thereby, in no small measure, for the oppressive heats.

DORMOUSE.—The Act of Uniformity, passed in the licentious reign of Charles II., was a most infamous one, enjoining as it did uniformity in matters of religion, and requiring all ministers who desired to continue in the Church, or be admitted to livings, to give their assent and consent to a new edition of the "Common Prayer Book" before many of them could possibly have seen it. Naturally, it caused the secession from the Church of numbers of pious and conscientious men, some 2000 in all; and the glorious stand which they made in defence of Christian liberty should win our gratitude and respect, as it did much to convince that profligate age of the reality of religion and the regard that is due to the rights of conscience.

MARY ANN.—The use of calomel predisposes to cold, and thus frequently brings on either inflammation or consumption.

Mrs. C. H.—1. Hampshire is supposed to produce the finest bacon; but we have eaten remarkably good in Yorkshire, and also in Gloucestershire. 2. Many thanks. We will endeavour to procure it. 3. 20,000.

DESMOND.—The monarchy of the British kingdom is limited and hereditary. Every British sovereign must not only profess the Protestant faith, but they may not marry Papists.

KILMAISHAM.—The hourly velocity of the earth is computed at 68,000 miles.

CLARA.—The words—

"Worse than a poignard in the basest hand,
It stabs at once the morals of a land,"

are Cowper's, and refer to the improper use of the pen, than which there is no more powerful weapon in the world, for "the pen is mightier than the sword."

HORACE D.—We cannot help it. It matters not who it is that is guilty of the error—archbishop, or bishop, or what not—"if it was" is ungrammatical, and you will not be held excused if you copy their bad example.

META W.—"Goose-cap" means a silly person. We do not consider it in the serious light in which you evidently regard it. However, if he be a gentleman, he will at once desist from its use upon your communicating to him your dislike of the epithet.

EAGLET.—How many hours did Methuselah exist? What a ridiculous question to ask, unless your education has been so sadly neglected as to prevent your doing the simple sum that is required to ascertain the number. For this once, acting on the hypothesis of your ignorance, remember, we will gratify your curiosity. Methuselah lived 969 years, consequently there were 8,494,254 hours in his life.

NEOPHYTE.—1. For common white enamel, take eight parts flint glass, two red-lead, half nitre, half arsenic. 2. If in the slightest degree over-fired, the colour will be destroyed. 3. Mix with turpentine, and use like other colours, with a pencil; after which, fuse again, and vitrify by fire. 4. Experience alone can decide.

MIRABEL.—1. Mrs. Weldon's "Journal" should suit your requirements, as it is not exclusively designed for the use of those who have £200 a year, or thereabouts, to spend annually on their dress. Most of the fashion journals, judging by their prevailing tone, are. 2. Chevasse, in his "Advice to a Mother," says there should be none.

AUTOLYCUS.—"Gynecocracy" means female ascendancy or government. It is also written "gynocracy."

MELCHIOR.—1. No; not necessarily. 2. The Lord Mayor's name is Ellis. 3. Any of the large upholstering firms would execute your order. 4. White, pale blue, sea-green.

F. E. P.—Coffee, if properly made, is very suitable for breakfast; tea is better in the evening. Cocoa can be taken at any time beneficially.

ST. JUST.—The ointment made of lard and milk of sulphur will be found very efficacious in the treatment of ulcers. It is a simple remedy, but has been known to work wonders.

PATER.—Do not force the child to take exercise upon an empty stomach. Give him a slice of bread and a draught of milk when he comes down of a morning, and then send him for a run, if the weather be fine. When he returns he will be ready for a hearty breakfast.

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